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EDITOR'S NOTE



Robert Keeley,
Editor

Thinking Time

It was touch and go whether I would get on a plane to head north for some annual leave. Without issuing a detailed medical report, I was variously indisposed, so my ability to fly was somewhat in question before I left for Darwin. That helps explain why I didn't pick up a camera for most of the first week we were drifting around one of the great destinations (for tourists and photographers) in our country. Things run on Darwin time up north. This small city (with around 120,000 people) next to an aqua blue harbour relies on tourists (mainly backpackers and grey nomads you'd think if you wandered down its main street), government workers (including the armed forces), and service industries for mining and big industrial projects. It also happens to be in one of the most visually spectacular regions you'll ever find. To top it off, around three hours south by hire car is one of Australia's iconic national parks, Kakadu.

Throw in some of the most inspiring Dry Season sunrises and sunsets, and it all adds up to a potent mix of camera-ready photo opportunities. But I'd arrived just happy to be there. So I didn't take any photos at all for several days, and even then I never really fully got into the swing of things, photographically speaking.

Fortunately that did afford me one opportunity many enthusiasts could take more advantage of – thinking time. Once you're a keen photographer it can be hard to step back and take a look at the

bigger picture. But sometimes that can be a real bonus. When you take a breather from the actual mechanics of shooting, you can more carefully take into consideration exactly what you're trying to achieve. At some point it will be worthwhile for every keen shooter to simply put their camera down for spell. It certainly afforded me the chance to think about my overall photographic aims and approach, and to consider the bigger picture. Taking good photos requires a unique combination of technical knowledge, and a feel for when an intriguing, dramatic, or evocative moment is happening before you. Getting that combination right is a thrill unlike any you'll achieve in any other creative medium, but it can be frustrating trying to reach that point. That's why simply putting your camera down for a while can be a truly rejuvenating process.

By our second week up north we were in Kakadu, photographing waterfalls, crocodiles, and some beautiful birdlife. We saw some amazing landscapes and all manner of wildlife, but we never saw the park's iconic Jabiru, a large white, red, and black water bird. Not until we were finally driving back to Darwin to conclude our foray. Then one of these rarely seen birds flew straight across in front of us, to land nearby in a small pond. It was a fantastic moment to see and soak up. But I was driving then, so I never got the picture. Guess I'll just have to put it down as an experience. ☺



PHOTO: ROBERT KEELEY

LEFT

Australia's Top End has some spectacular sunsets and sunrises (seen here) during the Dry Season. Capturing them is one of the many attractions for all visiting photographers.

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COVER:

Moonrise in the French Valley, Torres Del Paine National Park, Chile. Image by Jake Anderson. Nikon D800, 16-35mm lens @ 16mm, 25s @f/8, ISO 400, Post production - dodge and burn, curves, shadows.

BEHIND THE LENS



WEB: TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT
RONNIE HENG'S REMARKABLE
UNDERWATER WORLD.

Quick snaps



Olympus unveils OM-D E-M10 Mk II



VIDEO: ANGELA NICHOLSON REVIEWS THE OLYMPUS OM-D E-M10 II

Olympus has unveiled the second generation of its entry-level OM-D body, the E-M10 Mk II. The new model includes a redesigned 5-axis stabilisation system, a new 2.36-million-dot electronic viewfinder, and additional movie frame rates with Full HD (1080) video now available in 60p, 50p, 30p, 25p and 24p. Compared to the original model the Mk II uses an electronic shutter and offers a slightly faster continuous shooting speed, up from 8 to 8.5 frames per second in JPEG and RAW modes. The new model is also 10g lighter than its predecessor.

Other key features include a tilting LCD screen, 16.1-megapixel LiveMOS sensor, TruePic VII image engine, focus bracketing, touchscreen AF point selection, 4K resolution time-lapsed movies, built-in flash and Wi-Fi.

With Olympus' OI Share app (for iOS and Android) users can wirelessly transfer pictures and

videos from the camera to a phone, post images to social channels, and control the camera remotely.

As well as increasing the resolution of the new viewfinder (up from 1.44 to 2.36 million dots), Olympus has added a new feature called simulated optical viewfinder (S-OVF), which it says mimics the visual experience of a traditional SLR camera. It does this by enhancing HDR to improve viewing visibility in backlit photography. Olympus says the viewfinder also, "re-introduces the element of creative unpredictability inherent to SLRs."

The Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mk II will be available in September, priced from \$799 (body only).



ABOVE

Selected from 350 entries, the 2015 Olive Cotton award winner was 'Pandemonium's shadow' by Lennox Head, NSW, photographer Natalie Grono.



VIDEO: MORE ABOUT THE OLIVE COTTON AWARD FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITURE.

Natalie Grono wins Olive Cotton Award

Lennox Head photographer Natalie Grono has won the \$20,000 2015 Olive Cotton Award at Tweed Regional Gallery, Murwillumbah. The 'haunting and beautiful' work *Pandemonium's shadow* was selected from the 82 finalists, which included both emerging and established photographers selected from 350 entries.

The award is funded by the family of pioneering Australian photographer Olive Cotton in her memory. Cotton was considered one of Australia's leading twentieth century photographers. This year, photographer and documentary filmmaker Stephen Dupont judged the work, stating that Grono's work had struck him in the first round of the selection process.

"It's the image I kept being drawn to," he said. "I find it intriguing and haunting and beautiful; the harsh light and shadow work wonderfully and perfectly."

Five 'highly commended' awards were also given:

- *The Killing of Miller's Point (Pat and Brandy)*, 2015, by Sahlan Hayes.
- *Christopher Bates*, 2014, by Tobias Titz.
- *Dave Faulkner – The Guru Takes Tea*, 2014 by Stuart Spence.
- *Man Unknown, Venice*, 2015, by Zofia Nowicka.
- *Amara*, 2015, by Elise Searson.

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Gallipoli: Then and Now

An exhibition of photographs of Gallipoli veterans and their families made by Turkish-born photographer Vedat Acikalin is currently touring Australia and Turkey in this, the Centenary year of the Gallipoli campaign.

Acikalin, who migrated to Australia in 1973, captured some of the last surviving Turkish, Australian and New Zealand Gallipoli veterans at the 75th anniversary of the landing in Turkey in 1990. He has since added to that collection of images with photos of veterans' families.

"As a Turkish-Australian, the significance of the Gallipoli campaign, also known as the Battles of Canakkale (Battles of Dardanelles), is very powerful for me," says Acikalin. "Growing up I learned of the heroism and sacrifice of the Turkish soldiers under the leadership of Commander Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) in the Battles of Canakkale (the Gallipoli campaign) through school history lessons, stories, songs and poems. When I hear these today, it is still very emotional for me. When I immigrated to Australia in 1973, it was the first I learned of the ANZAC legend created by Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought at Gallipoli. The ANZAC tradition with its ideals of courage, endurance and mateship, was established. I was fascinated by seeing both sides of the same war and how time changes people."

Acikalin's images are a moving testament to those that served in Gallipoli, their families, and the lasting effects the war has had on the people of two countries.

Gallipoli Then & Now: Bonds Forged by War is touring now and will be in Perth, Melbourne and Canberra later this the year. More info: www.popupp.com.au



Fujifilm goes infrared with unique X-T1 IR

Fujifilm has unveiled its first dedicated infrared X-series camera, the X-T1 IR. While the new model is based on the Fujifilm X-T1, it can 'see' light from the ultraviolet (UV), visible and infrared (IR) portions of the light spectrum (approximately 380-1,000nm).

Fujifilm says the infrared capabilities of the camera make it well suited to uses in crime scene investigation, healthcare diagnostics, and scientific applications. No doubt it will also appeal to creative photographers interested in capturing the kind of infrared effects that were once only available with infrared film and specially converted digital cameras.

The 16.3-megapixel camera is compatible with the full range of X-series lenses. It will be available in America for US\$1699.95 from October. It is not known yet if the camera will be sold in Australia.

Humans of Newtown

A new book showcasing the locals of the inner Sydney suburb of Newtown launched in September.

Humans of Newtown is a collection of portraits taken on the streets of one of Australia's most alternative suburbs – Newtown in Sydney's Inner West. Newtown is a place where being different isn't just encouraged, it's celebrated. *Humans of Newtown* tells the stories of the people who live, work and play in this unique suburb.

Having lived in the heart of Newtown for almost two decades, photojournalist Jo Wallace observed the many quirks and charms that make Newtown such a distinct pocket of urban Australian life.

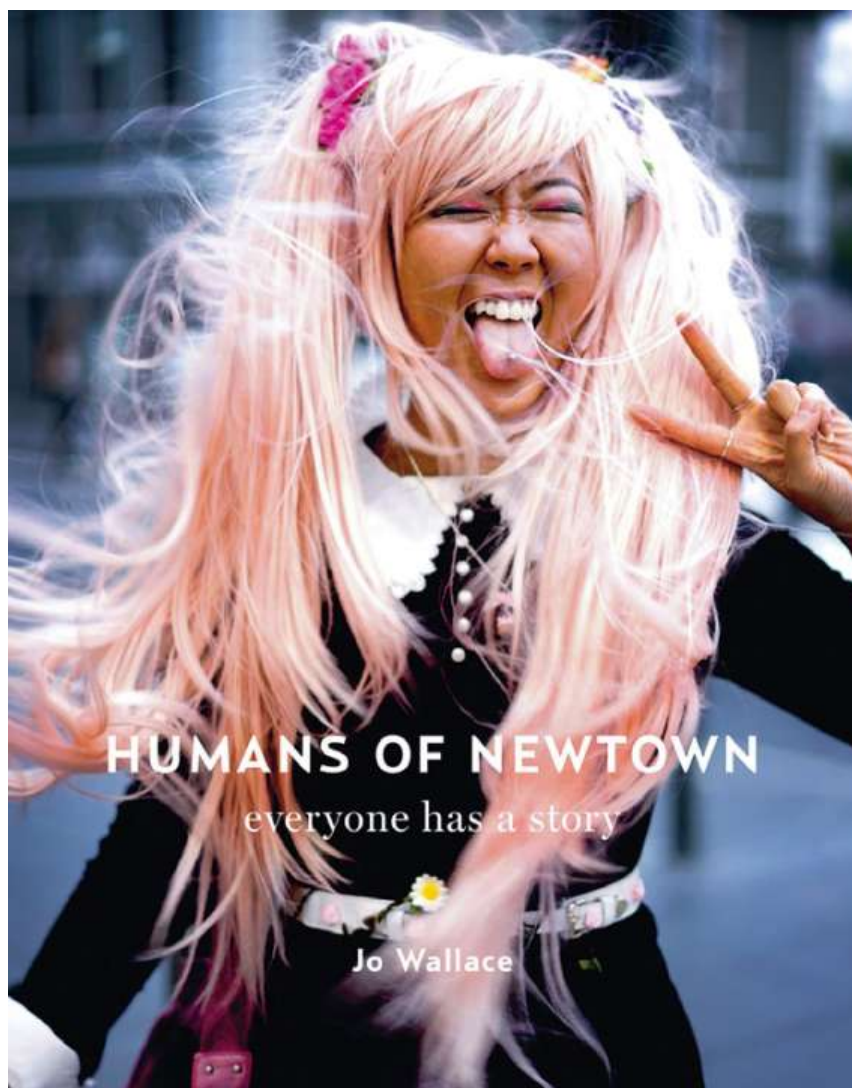
"This project has provided a wonderful opportunity to create a social snapshot of the distinctly unique vibe that attracts people to Newtown from all over the world," said Wallace.

For many years Wallace had wanted to document the unique characters in the community. In late 2013 she came

across the myriad of "Humans of" web pages. There are well over 280 "Humans of" sites, including Humans of New York. Each blog, with its own distinct style, tells the tales of local community members around the world through words and pictures.

Wallace's project featured on the current affairs ABC program 7.30 as well as ABC News Breakfast, Channel 10 News, Guardian Australia and local media outlets. Newtown resident Val Lehmann-Monck, who shared her story on the blog about her battle with breast cancer said, "The responses were so amazing and heart-lifting. *Humans of Newtown* is a local 'gem'; peeping into and sharing the hearts of people who live here. The project has touched so many, including me. I even had strangers come up to me and tell me how moved they were by reading my story. It was amazing."

Humans of Newtown is published by King Street Press and is available online at www.humansofnewtown.com.au/shop and in bookshops for \$39.95.



WEB: FOLLOW HUMANS OF NEWTOWN.





Add professional monitoring and recording to any SDI and HDMI camera with Blackmagic Video Assist!

Blackmagic Video Assist is the ultimate on set production monitor and recorder for any SDI or HDMI camera! The large bright 5 inch monitor lets you see your framing and ensure you get absolutely perfect focus! The built in recorder uses common SD cards and records extremely high quality 10-bit 4:2:2 ProRes or DNxHD files that are much better quality than most cameras can record and are compatible with all video software. Now it's easy to add professional monitoring and recording to any camera!

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Fast Touchscreen Controls

The built in monitor features a touchscreen to make setting up and using Blackmagic Video Assist incredibly easy! Use simple tap and swipe gestures to make adjustments, display camera information and evaluate audio levels and exposure. The elegant heads up display is semi transparent so you can still see your video at all times!

Broadcast Quality Connections

Blackmagic Video Assist includes HDMI and 6G-SDI inputs so you can record from virtually any camera or DSLR. The HDMI and SDI video outputs means you get the ultimate hand held media player for viewing shots on set or presenting to clients. You also get a headphone jack, 12V power and two LP-E6 battery slots for non stop power!

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Prashphutita
A. Greco

Q&A

AP answers your photographic queries



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ABOVE

While polarising filters are certainly capable of achieving dramatic looking blue skies under the appropriate conditions, there's a strong likelihood of uneven tonality when a very wide-angle lens is used to take in a large expanse of sky.

Polariser & wide angle

Q I have a wide angle lens which covers the focal range from 11 to 16mm. When I take pictures and use a polarising filter I tend to get a dark spot, or, say, a very blue section in the middle of the picture of the sky which only happens with the wide-angle lens. How do I prevent this?
Malcolm Way, Picnic Point, NSW.

A An 11-16mm lens does provide a very large angle-of-view. You don't say if you're using the lens with a full-frame or APS-C sensor, but even if it is APS-C the 35mm equivalent would be 16.5-24mm, which is still a large angle-of-view.

Most likely the variation in tonality of the sky is caused by the proper operation of the polarising filter. Remember that such a filter acts on polarised light, similar to the way Polaroid sunglasses block glare on a sunny day, for instance reflected light from a body of water. There will be varying amounts of polarised light over such a vast area of sky. This depends on the sun's position in the sky, and where your lens is pointed relative to the sun's position. The band of sky containing the most amount of polarised light can be determined by various factors. Try this approach to determine it. 1. Form a right angle with your index finger and thumb; 2. Point your index finger at the sun; 3. Rotate your hand about the wrist and noting the

arc described by the tip of your thumb, from horizon to horizon.

If vignetting (darkening of the corners of the frame) were the problem, then this would result from the polariser not overlapping the lens' front element sufficiently, or too great a thickness of the actual polarising filter itself, or the presence of other filters as well (Skylight, UV, Warming, etc.).

Some solutions to your situation would include avoiding the use of the polariser altogether with your wide-angle lens (affixing the polariser only to a lens having a focal length in the 'normal' to telephoto range). Note that, when the lens is aimed at an expanse of sky away from the sun, the sky will naturally appear a darker tone of blue. Alternatively, if you need to use the polariser on your wide angle zoom, then avoid rotating the polariser to where it achieves maximum darkening (polarisation), so the dark areas are less noticeable. Also avoid using the broadest wide angle setting range on your lens – only use your zoom lens at the 16mm setting. You could also take your images when the sun is at a different position in the sky (sunrise or sunset), or in different atmospheric conditions (when some thin, wispy clouds were present in the scene). You could even use a different composition (if possible), so the darkening isn't so obvious. Experimentation is required in this type of situation.

DxO and NVIDIA not 'playing nice'

Q I've been using DxO OpticsPro for years without any problems until recently. The company's most recent update (10.4) has my PC all over the place! Having overcome all the admin privileges checks during the installation, I opened the software.



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Q&A Reminder

Where possible, please supply relevant images with your query if you have any, as well as background information and pertinent details. This helps in providing more specifically targeted information, rather than having to outline a list of possibilities.



EMAIL: GOT A QUESTION FOR Q&A? DROP US AN EMAIL.

But the picture breaks up into “squares” of different colorations and the CPU then goes into overdrive. There is no improvement if I opt for GPU off. I have raised this problem with DxO. A few suggestions were forthcoming with the emphasis being on the drivers I had loaded for my NVIDIA Quadro system. However, I’m fully up to date according to NVIDIA. I am running Windows 7 Pro SP1. I am now at the point where DxO says it is not its problem, but NVIDIA’s! Meanwhile I continue to use DxO OpticsPro 10.2! Is there anything else I should have tried?
Mike Fretwell, Burra, SA.

A This can be a particularly difficult situation to resolve due to the many possible interactions between various items of software, hardware, firmware, drivers, and operating systems.

Before any tinkering I’d recommend making sure you have a current, tested system image for your C:\ partition, (operating system, programs and settings) in case your operating system and/or programs become unstable or unusable.

To start with, under the program’s Preferences menu go to ‘Display and Process’ and check that both ‘Enable OpenCL’ and ‘GPU Acceleration’ are unchecked.

Thanks for sending the screenshot of the Windows Experience Index, containing your system configuration details. There is additional and better organised information obtainable from the DirectX Diagnostic Tool, standard with Windows going way, way back. This is most easily accessible by:

Tapping the Win key (the Windows icon, adjacent to the Ctrl key at the lower left-hand side of the keyboard);

Typing dxdiag into the (white) search box which appears, then pressing Enter.

See also:

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/which-version-directx#which-version-directx=windows-7>



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As you appear to have DirectX 10, and DirectX 11 is available, it would be worthwhile to upgrade from the Microsoft website (the URL above). This will likely improve the graphics performance in other programs, and, possibly also help resolve the problem you’re currently experiencing with DxO OpticsPro Version 10.4 not “playing nice” with your system.

While the Support Desk for a particular product (in this case, DxO OpticsPro) will always insist that you need the latest Driver version installed, it’s possible this has introduced a problem which wasn’t in previous releases. For instance, in resolving 50 old bugs 20 new bugs might have been introduced!

Hence, it might be possible that the up-to-date version of the graphics card driver is now incompatible with the current version of DxO OpticsPro, which likely would have been tested with another (prior) version of the graphics card driver. In this case you’d want to go back to a previous version of the driver. Regardless of any finger-pointing by the major parties involved, be aware of all the possible interactions. Sometimes, a problem might be resolved in future with a later version of the program, or even with updates to the operating system.

One useful option to eliminate many variables is to boot the PC into “safe mode”, which will load a minimal set of standard Windows drivers. This is achieved

at Windows boot-up time by holding down the F8 function key. You’ll find yourself in a very primitive-looking environment, including low-resolution (Windows VGA graphics driver loaded), white text on a black background, etc. If DxO OpticsPro Ver 10.4 now functions correctly, you’ve at least helped to isolate the problem.

GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) processing power can be greater than that of the CPU (Central Processing Unit). For example, your Intel Core i7 is problematic at times, hence the setting to switch-off the option for the program to take advantage of it, if available (with a sufficiently powerful graphics card).

As can be gleaned from comments on the DxO Forum: <http://forum.dxo.com/index.php?action=recent;start=20> other users have also experienced problems with DxO OpticsPro and NVIDIA graphics cards.

A later version of the NVIDIA driver may well allow your current version of DxO OpticsPro to function with both GPU Acceleration and OpenCL.

As one user adamantly expressed on the DxO Forum, the problem is in the coding of the DxO OpticsPro program, since other graphics programs behave correctly with the same NVIDIA card on his system. ☹

ABOVE

An essential part of the display chain, video graphics cards can be problematic with some programs due to the many possible interactions between software, hardware, firmware, drivers, and the operating system.

Got a question?

Photography got you stumped? If you have any queries at all relating to photography or digital imaging please email our correspondent Prashputita Greco at ganda@australianphotography.com. Please include your question, along with your name, suburb, state and phone number. Prashputita will try to get back to you with an answer within a couple of weeks.

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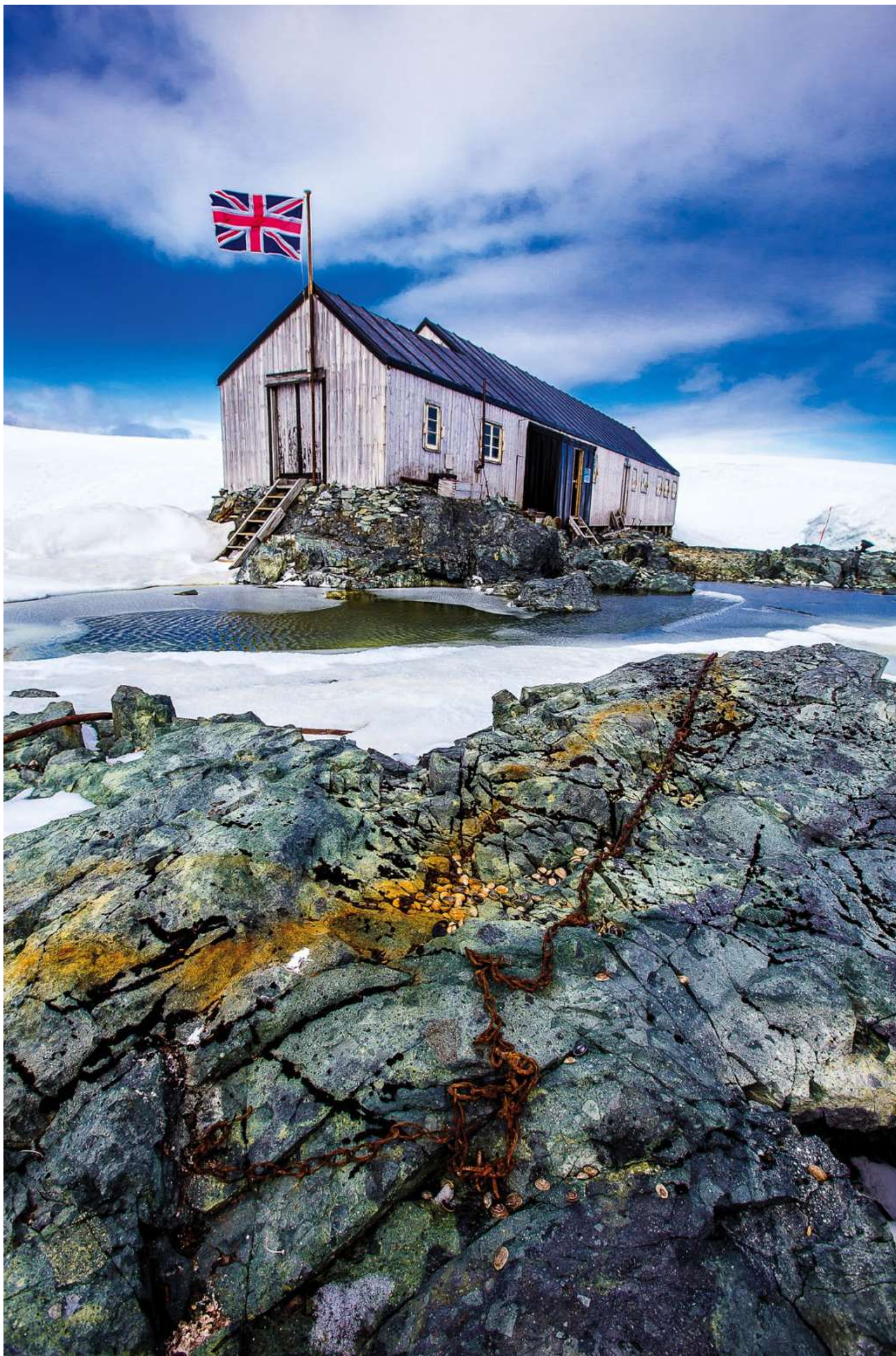
Darran Leal

RIGHT

The tiny hut at the old abandoned British Antarctic 'Base W' on Detaile Island on a rare balmy Antarctic day. Aperture Priority, 16-35mm lens @ 16mm, 1/350s @ f/9.5, ISO 400, +0.5 EV, hand held. Processed in Lightroom.

OPPOSITE

While shooting I decided that this classic expedition scene at the abandoned British Antarctic 'Base W' on Detaile Island would look best in black and white. Aperture Priority, 16-35mm lens @ 16mm, 1/45s @ f/3.5, ISO 1600, +0.5 EV, hand held. Processed in Lightroom.





WEB: SEE MORE OF
DARRAN'S WORK
AT WORLD PHOTO
ADVENTURES.

More than snow & ice

From the extreme environments of deserts to the snow and ice of our north and south poles, **Darran Leal** has photographed some fascinating stories of human exploration.

Our planet's polar regions are well-known for their ice, snow and wilderness, yet they offer so much more. Quality time at these locations can present you a weather window and an experience like no other. A walk up to higher points will simply take your breathe away and may well have you thinking you're on a different planet. The natural environment is outstanding. Imagine waking up in the middle of the night, it's still daylight and the crew have spotted a polar bear – amazing! Then you have the historical records of human

intervention. Humans haven't been kind to the local wildlife. Other sites offer a snapshot in time, of explorers and how their life was lived in such tough environments. While I love to shoot landscapes and nature, I can get just as much out of shooting the less obvious images. I've visited bases in the Arctic and Antarctica and my favourite is probably the abandoned British Antarctic 'Base W' on Detaille Island. It has been restored in recent years to offer visitors a window into the past of our adventurers and explorers. It offers a glimpse of the basic lifestyle in a hut no larger than a standard shed. Imagine

living in such conditions for several months, with very little or no daylight! What a challenge! It makes our efforts to photograph the conditions and elements pale by comparison.

I take my hat off to those early explorers and I hope my images can convey just a part of what they had to live through. 🌐

Darran and Julia Leal and their company World Photo Adventures are celebrating 26 years of hosting photo tours around the world. If you're interested in a professionally guided photo tour and a unique photo adventure go to: worldphotoadventures.com.au



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LANDSCAPE / PORTRAIT / NATURE / BLACK & WHITE JUNIOR LANDSCAPE / JUNIOR PORTRAIT

Individual winners will be named in each category and an additional award will be presented to an overall winner, who will be named 2015 Photographer of the Year.

PRIZES

The Photographer of the Year presented by Olympus winner will win \$5,000 cash plus an Olympus OM-D package to the value of \$1,495. Category winners will share in the following prizes:

- \$1,000 cash per senior category
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- Camera House \$1,000 voucher
- Zenfolio Premium 2-year Business Account valued at \$480
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- 6 x \$100 voucher from Camera House
- \$250 cash per junior category

TO ENTER

Upload a portfolio of six images, addressing one of the categories (Landscape, Portrait, Nature or Black & White) @ www.australianphotography.com 

- You may enter more than one category (however, the same photo may not be used in multiple categories, for example Landscape and Black and White).
- Entries close: 5pm, 6 November, 2015.
- You may enter each category as many times as you like.
- Entry fee: Adult, \$20 per portfolio of six images. Junior, \$10 per portfolio of six images

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Your best shot Red

The brief for our latest competition had many of you seeing red. Which is exactly what we wanted! Here are some of the most creative and interesting interpretations on this month's colourful theme.





WINNER

PHOTOGRAPHER

**Susan
Vearncombe**

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Susan Vearncombe tells us this photo was taken in the small village of Bithoo, in India on Holi Day. She says the women were within a courtyard having a great time, while the men were separated from them. She says, "I took this shot from the top of the building to encompass the throng and the mass of colour. There must be almost every conceivable variation of red, a few other colours besides, and everything works so harmoniously." We agree entirely, Susan! Congratulations on winning this month's award. We loved the photojournalistic style of this shot, and the teeming mass of people with a range of different expressions (including many covered faces). The variations on the colourful theme really added extra impact for us.

DETAILS

Nikon D750, 24-120mm f/4 lens @ 66mm, 1/160s @ f/8, ISO 100. Post production in Lightroom: added a -13 vignette, +12 contrast.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

PHOTOGRAPHER

John Rogers

EDITOR'S COMMENT

John Rogers says, "I had to go against all the normal rules for composition due to the limited time I had to shoot. Travelling on the back of a moving truck in the Naukluft National Park in Namibia I would've liked to have positioned the tree or road to the left of the image and the horizon in a different place, but due to the circumstances I could only take what I had in front of me before we changed direction for another yet amazing vista." In this instance we think John Rogers' first instinct (to shoot this scene as it was) proved to be the right one. While constructions like the 'rule of thirds' often work, it's important to recognise when they don't (or you don't have the time to make them work). John Rogers also says, "To have just two dominant colours in an image was something I have never experienced before or after." He should keep his eye for out for this scenario in future, as this idea has also worked well.

DETAILS

Canon EOS 50D, 70-200mm f/2.8 lens, 1/125s @ f/7.1, ISO 100. Slightly cropped in PS5.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

PHOTOGRAPHER

Eliza Alford

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Eliza Alford wanted to try a different technique so she set this experimental image up and worked it in post production. We think she's done so quite successfully. She says, "I wanted to practice the 'invisible black background' technique I'd just learnt about, so my subject was a simple match stuck to the top of a bottle. For this technique I needed to set shutter speed to match the maximum sync speed of my camera and flash – 1/250s – and a low ISO of 100. Then, turning the flash off, I experimented to find the aperture which would give a completely black image, which turned out to be 10. Turning the flash back on, I could now take a photo with only the match illuminated and the background black (although some shaping of the flash with a piece of cardboard was required). Using this technique I decided to take a series of photos of the 'life-cycle' of the match – unlit, burning and gone out, as well as some with great smoke trails. For this particular photo I layered together three photos of the same match." Trying techniques like this is worthwhile as you can always learn something new. In this case Eliza Alford has also earned a commendation from us!

DETAILS

Nikon D7000, Nikkor 18-55mm @ 48mm with 10x macro filter, 1/250s @ f/10, ISO 100. Speedlight SB700 flash, Gorillapod tripod. Three photos layered onto black background, minor corrections with black paintbrush, sharpening.



PHOTOGRAPHER

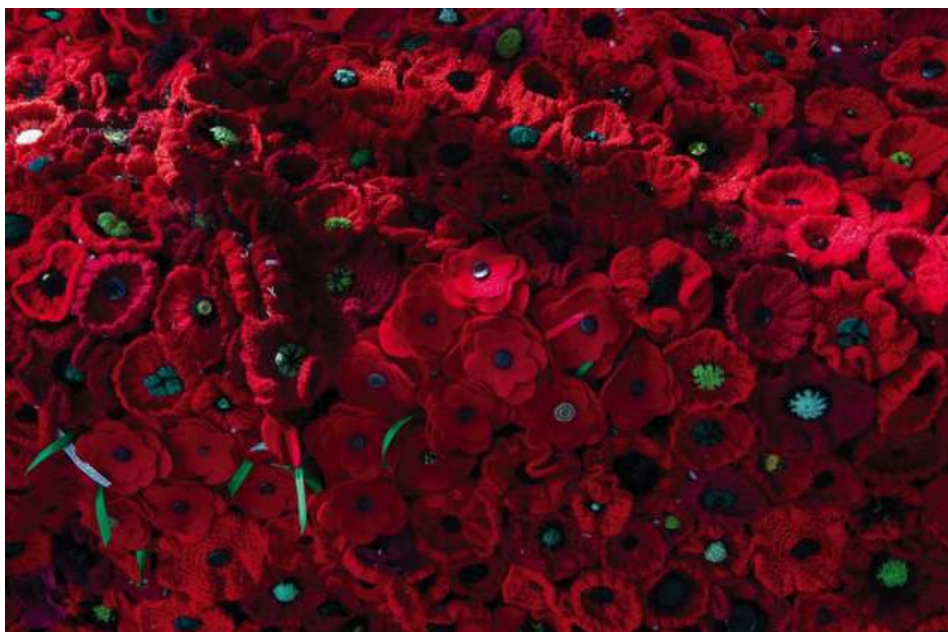
Ian Houghton

HOW I DID IT

This hot-air balloon 'Truffels' is a regular in Canberra skies. This shot was taken looking up into the balloon just before the final blast of the burner prior to lift off. For me, the lines lead our eye to the crown set in the top third, and the dark negative space at the top stops the eye from wandering too far.

DETAILS

Canon 5D Mk III, EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM @ 35mm, 1/15s @ f/11, ISO 800.



PHOTOGRAPHER

Barbara Matheson

HOW I DID IT

This photo was taken in the atrium of Federation Square, Melbourne, while hand-made poppies were being turned into carpets before the ANZAC commemoration this year. This section of carpet was draped over a low ledge, giving it an interesting perspective. The muted light entering the atrium opening added to the composition as well. The RAW file was processed through Adobe raw software for Photoshop CS 4. I find red subjects can be difficult to shoot and I was especially careful not to overexpose the file as the highlights can easily burn out.

DETAILS

Pentax K-5 Mk II, Pentax 18-135 lens @ 31mm, 1/30s @ f/8, ISO 250. Spot metering.

PHOTOGRAPHER

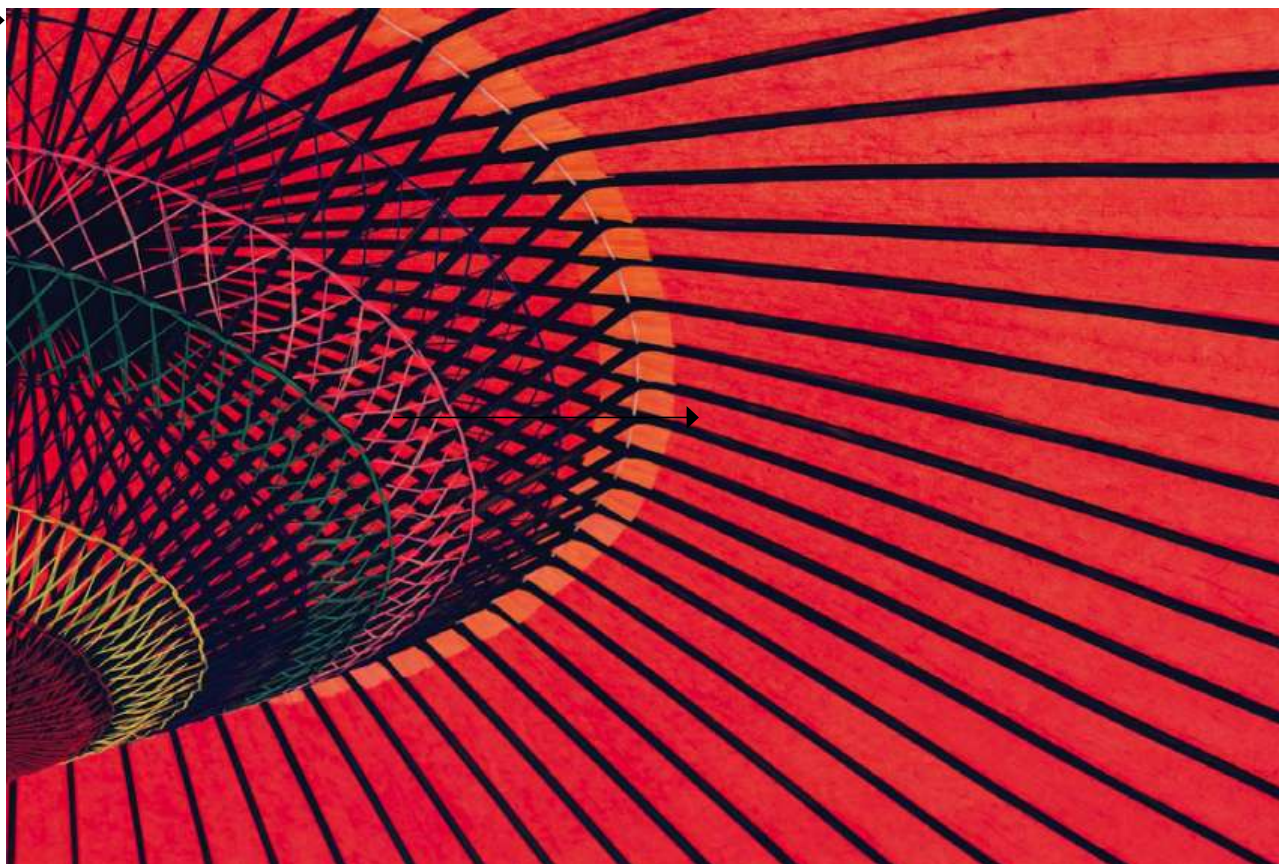
Oleg Belov

HOW I DID IT

This image was taken while my wife and I were honeymooning in Japan. It was a hot, humid day and we took refuge under this parasol for a green-tea ice cream after exploring Kyoto's Golden Temple. The vibrant red of the parasol was enhanced by the sun beating down on it and filtering through the material. The colour, subject matter and context of this photograph is, for me, quintessentially Japanese.

DETAILS

Canon EOS 60D, 17-55mm lens @ 42mm, 1/100s @ f/7.1, ISO 100. Increased clarity and vibrance.



PHOTOGRAPHER

Danielle Metcalf

HOW I DID IT

This is the Story Bridge in Brisbane, which was lit up in red for Red Cross 'Door Knock' Appeal. I was happy with the way the lights burst and the detail in the shadows. I was with a friend and lucky for us we had attended a course in night photography earlier that evening. I was trying to show the colour as well as the structure in the shadows.

DETAILS

Canon 1100D, 36mm focal length, 1/25s @ f/11, ISO 100, tripod, white balance on manual. Photoshop used to check clarity and enhance the red colour.



YOUR BEST SHOT

How to enter

Your Best Shot is open to AP subscribers and APS members. To enter an image in the comp, check the competition themes and instructions below and email your best image to yourbestshot@australianphotography.com 

UPCOMING COMPETITION THEMES

DECEMBER ISSUE

CLOSE UP/MACRO

Deadline: Sept 30, 2015

JANUARY ISSUE

HEIGHT

Deadline: Oct 31, 2015

FEBRUARY ISSUE

LINES

Deadline: Nov 30, 2015

MARCH ISSUE

HEAT

Deadline: Dec 10, 2015

APRIL ISSUE

THE BEACH

Deadline: Jan 31, 2016



EMAIL DETAILS

- Send your entry to yourbestshot@australianphotography.com
- Include the name of the competition theme you are entering in the email subject line, for example 'Rain' or 'Abstract'.
- Please include the following details with your entry: your name, image title (if there is one) and 100-200 words about how you created your image. Please also include technical details including camera, lens, focal length, shutter speed, aperture, filter (if used), tripod (if used) and details of any software manipulation.
- Entries may be submitted up to midnight on the evening of the specified deadline.

IMAGE REQUIREMENTS

- Images must be saved in JPEG format.
- Ideal image size is between 30 and 42cm (on the longest edge) at a resolution of 300 pixels per inch (ppi). A JPEG compression of 9/12 (or 75%) will keep images to an acceptable email size without noticeably reducing image quality.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- To enter, you must be a subscriber to *Australian Photography + digital* or be a member of the Australian Photographic Society (APS). See inside for subscription offers.
- The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Employees of Yaffa Publishing (and freelance contributors) are not eligible to win the prize.
- Submitted images must have been taken no more than 24 months before the competition deadline.
- The prize is subject to change without notification.
- You must have an Australian street address to be eligible to win the prize.
- By entering you grant Yaffa Publishing the right to publish your image in *Australian Photography + digital* and at www.australianphotography.com for the purposes of promoting the *Your Best Shot* competition. Copyright remains the property of the photographer.

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28 DRAWING WITH LIGHT

Drew Hopper used a light painting technique in a very different way when he visited a storm drain with an array of artificial lights. He explains how he achieves his spectacular results.

36 ARCHITECTURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Creating great architectural images requires some very specific skills. Rob Ditezza talks to three veterans of the architecture photography genre to find out how they go about their craft.

46 GOING WILD

Eleven of our best landscape photographers talk to Brent McKean about their favourite shooting locales, and offer their tips on how to make better images when working outdoors.

60 ON THE TEA ROAD

On a trip to Sri Lanka Editor Robert Keeley took time out to capture photojournalistic images of a renowned tea-growing region in the country's central mountains.

68 TESTED: PANASONIC G7

Panasonic's latest mirrorless camera has a range of excellent features in an easier to handle package than an SLR, says Anthony McKee.



Features

This month we talk to three professional architecture shooters about how they go about their work, we discover the favourite locations of 11 of our top landscape and wildlife photographers, and we explain a nifty light-painting technique.



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HOW TO Create Light Paintings



WEB: SEE MORE OF DREW
HOPPER'S IMAGES.

Drawing with Light

How much fun you can have in a concrete tunnel after dark? Plenty says **Drew Hopper** who reveals the secrets behind his stunning light paintings.

Light painting is a fun photographic technique, usually performed at night or in a dark place, where the photographer uses different lighting elements during a long exposure. The duration of the exposure is typically around three minutes, but you can get great results shooting from a few seconds to several hours. There's no limit to your creativity when you paint with light. Lighting can be introduced directly or indirectly using different light sources – anything from flashlights, glow-sticks, lasers, mobile phones – basically any technology that emits light will work. You don't have to spend a lot of money to get great 'light painting' images, and it's always fun to make your own lighting tools.

Camera equipment

Light painting photography isn't that difficult, but there are a few essential pieces of equipment you'll need for capturing great photos. Here is a list of mandatory and optional items I use to make my light painting images.

- A DSLR, or a camera with manual settings and 'Bulb' exposure option. Bulb mode is essential for long exposures past most cameras' manual exposure limit, which is 30 seconds.

MAIN

Three Spirographs with light trails were created with rainbow-coloured battery operated LED finger lights. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40mm @ 17mm, 75s, f/4, ISO 400, tripod. Contrast, saturation, colour balance and cropping in Photoshop CS5.

RIGHT

The wheel used to produce the 'Spirograph' effect. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40mm @ 17mm, 1/50s @ f/4, ISO 400.







- An camera with RAW functionality. This isn't mandatory, but it will give you more control when you're processing your images.
- A sturdy tripod. You want one that can withstand strong gusts of wind just in case it's windy.
- A cable release or remote trigger with a locking mechanism or timer to set your bulb exposure for long periods. These are available for all major DSLR and mirrorless cameras and they come in a variety of types, including wireless models which use infrared technology.
- Wide-angle lenses are ideal for capturing light paintings. It will give you the creative freedom to move around without leaving your frame when painting with light. A fast aperture is also useful, but not mandatory. You can always increase your ISO if you don't have a wide-aperture lens.
- Spare batteries for your camera are highly recommended since long exposures and cold temperatures quickly eat up battery life! On a productive night I usually go through two or three batteries. The last thing you want is your battery dying halfway through a shoot, when you haven't brought a replacement.
- Neutral density filters help eliminate light reaching your

camera's sensor. Most of the time you'll be shooting without any filters, but if you shoot during the day, ND filters will help to cancel out ambient light.

Camera settings

As mentioned, you will need to set your shutter speed manually or set it to the 'Bulb' function in your camera. Exposure times will vary depending on how much ambient light there is, the strength of the introduced light from light painting, and your camera's other settings (aperture and ISO).

Most cameras are capable of exposures up to 30 seconds without a cable release. If you need a longer exposure, use the 'Bulb' setting (usually next after the 30" seconds setting) and connect your cable release to trigger the shutter.

ISO is important to understand when lighting painting, because it's counter-intuitive. You may think because it's dark outside that a higher ISO is required, but this isn't always the case. To keep noise to a minimum choose a lower ISO and this will give you more time to paint in the light during the longer exposure. Typically I shoot between ISO 200 and 400, which



LEFT

Spirograph light painting with two cycles of the wheel inside the tunnel and light orb created with battery operated string lights and EL (electroluminescent) wire waved around in the foreground for a misty effect. Canon EOS 5D Mk II, Canon 17-40mm @ 17mm, 77s @ f/5.6, ISO 400, tripod. Adjustments in Photoshop CS5.

BELOW

Spirograph light painting photo inside the selected tunnel with the assistance of a friend who stood at the end of the tunnel holding two LED torches shining onto the walls of the tunnel to bounce light. Canon EOS 5D Mk II, 17-40mm @ 17mm, 167s @ f/14, ISO 200, tripod. Saturation, contrast and sharpening in Photoshop CS5.



my camera is capable of doing with minimal noise. If your ISO is too high you will have less time to paint, with the subsequent possibility of blowing out highlights.

White balance is a personal preference and I usually leave mine set to “Auto” and correct it later in post production in the computer. As long as you shoot RAW you’re able to make these adjustments when processing your images.

Focusing at night is very different from focusing during the day. Auto focus will not respond in a pitch-black environment and your camera will struggle to lock onto the subject. You’ll need to manually focus your lens, which can also prove difficult at night.

Night focus techniques

Because of the difficulty of focusing at night or in the dark, you need some alternative strategies. We’ll look at a couple of options available for night focusing here.

Infinity Focus: I don’t typically use this method when light painting because I often shoot from close range. Infinity works best at smaller apertures when your subject is three metres or more away. Landscape and ‘astro’ (star) photography is best done with the focus on infinity.

It’s tricky knowing when you are set to infinity or not. Some lenses are easier to set to infinity, but even then if it’s slightly past the gauge your photo will be out of focus. Line the line up to the mark on your lens; this is infinity, not before or after. It’s important to get it right.

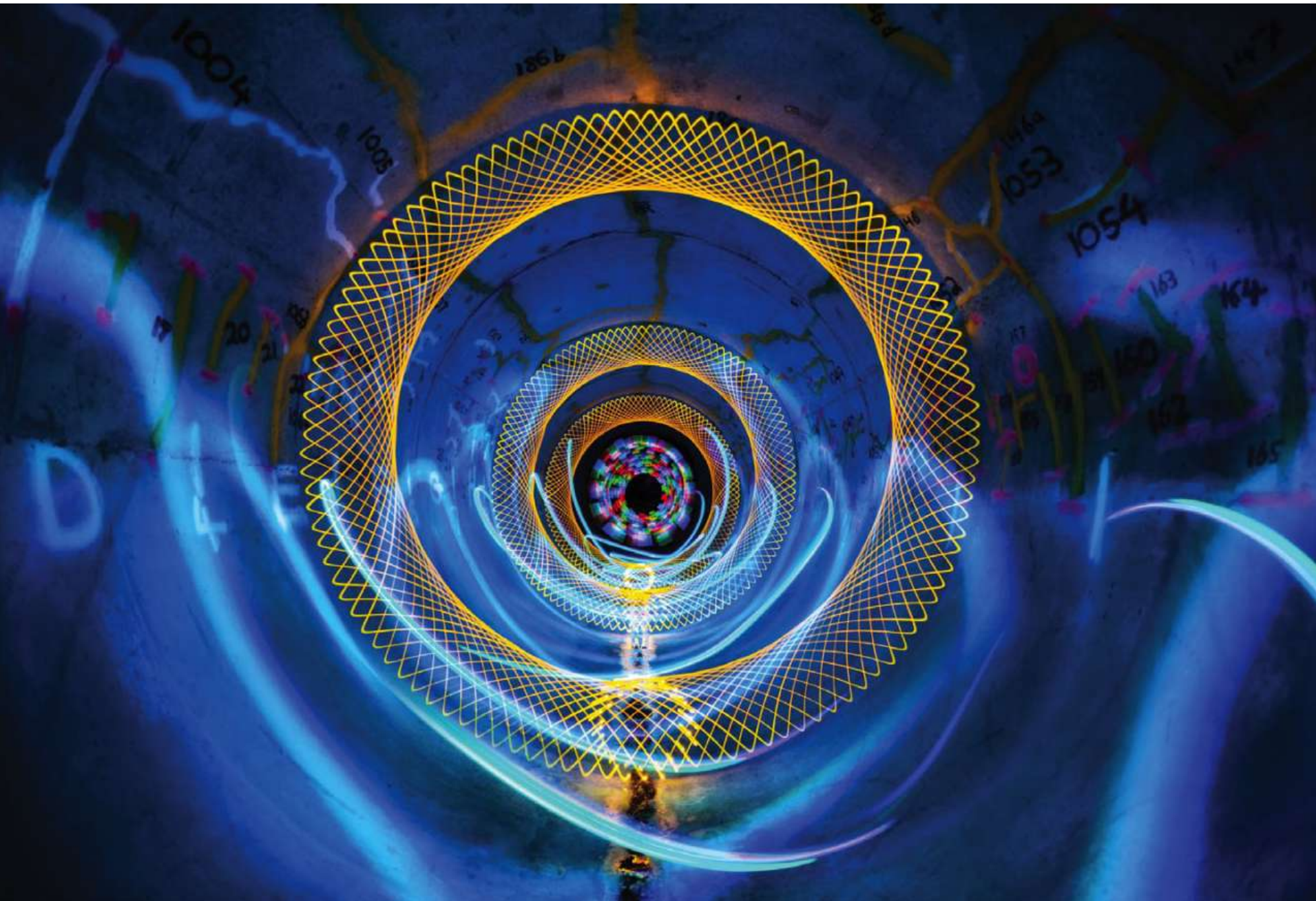
Live View manual focusing: Most DSLR cameras have live-view functionality and with optical viewfinders it offers a bright, crystal-clear image of your subjects and removes the element of doubt when composing and focusing your images. Live View mode effectively transforms your LCD screen into a big viewfinder. This is achieved by locking the mirror to allow constant light to reach the sensor. Live View’s ability to magnify the image to 10x makes it easy to tell when you have achieved correct focus.

It’s important to set your lens/camera to manual focus. Use a high ISO when focusing to help see what you’re doing, then remember to reset to a lower ISO when you’ve focused otherwise your images will be overexposed. Another great way to be sure your images are sharp is to shine a torch on your subject and magnify to 5x or 10x, move the little square on the LCD screen to the area your torch is illuminating and manually adjust your focus until it’s sharp. You’ll only be able to do this if you have an

HOW TO Create Light Paintings



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ABOVE

Yellow Spirographs and blue battery operated LED lights moved around in the foreground to create lead-in lines to a rainbow wheel of light at the end of the tunnel. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40mm @ 17mm, 63s @ f/4, ISO 640, tripod. Curves, levels, saturation, colour balance and sharpening in Photoshop CS5.

assistant or an object in the frame! Once you've focused you're ready to start shooting. Note, if you move your camera or your subject leaves the focal plane you'll need to refocus.

Choosing your location

A good location with potential is just as important as a good technique, but it can sometimes prove difficult to find somewhere suitable.

Try to go location scouting during the day to save yourself time and give you an idea of the type of images you might take. Whenever I'm out and about I always keep an eye open for potential places to revisit at night. This has saved me countless hours wandering around in the dark! Trespassing is not advised; always get permission from the landowner before entering private property. Most people are intrigued by light painting and will not object to you taking photos, and you can even end up with a curious assistant!

Abandoned houses, factories and buildings all make fantastic locations, and they're usually free of any light pollution. I've visited a few old houses. They can be spooky, but that adds to the atmosphere of the images.

Be careful when you're walking around these places as structures may be weak and the last thing you want is a self-inflicted injury. This is another reason why it pays to visit a location in daylight beforehand. One of my favourite places to light paint is inside tunnels, waterways and other curved structures. These structures are perfect for creating Spirograph light paintings.

What are Spirographs?

A Spirograph is a drawing tool that was popular with kids in the sixties and seventies. Consisting of two plastic rings with gear teeth, and a range of gear wheels, you could produce all sorts of weird and wonderful patterns by putting your pen or pencil through any of the pre-drilled holes in the gear wheel and rotating it around the inner or outer circumference of one of the plastic rings.

Spirograph light painting

Painting with light is no different to painting with a brush, except the light is the paint and your sensor is the canvas. You move the instrument to create something physical. Attaching LED lights to a bicycle wheel and moving it around a curved structure like a

tunnel creates a Spirograph effect. It sounds relatively simple, but it requires some trial and error to get the best results.

Here's what you need:

- A bicycle wheel (any size will work, however the bigger you go the more difficult it becomes to wheel it around. I like to use a BMX wheel as I find it easier to manoeuvre inside a tunnel. Make sure your wheel has a tyre because it will make rolling it around smoother and less tiring!
- Battery operated LED string lights. You can buy these cheaply at discount stores or online in a variety of colours and lengths. Around 10 to 15 lights are enough to go round the inside of a 20in bicycle wheel. If you use a bigger wheel you may need to add more lights. It pays to have extra lights and you can always tape the unused ones up with electrical tape so they're not visible. Evenly tape the lights to the diameter of the bicycle wheel, placing them between every second or third spoke.
- Any remaining lights will need to be hidden, so tape them up and stick them to the back of the wheel, out of sight. Keep spare batteries for the lights in your bag. Rechargeable AAs are a great investment. Be sure to keep the battery pack and switch close to the handle to make it easily accessible in the dark. You don't want to be fiddling around trying to find the switch!
- A roll of black electrical tape. You can never have enough of this stuff; it has endless uses and every photographer should keep a roll in their bag. It's easier to use than gaffer tape and it can be stretched to ensure a tight binding. Avoid using light-coloured tape or duct tape as it leaves a messy residue should you need to replace the lights.
- Black spray paint. If your bicycle wheel is silver or white you'll want to cover it up. Spray the entire wheel in flat black paint. It doesn't need to be perfect, just as long as it's covered. If the wheel has any reflectors, remove them or spray over them. By painting it black the wheel won't reflect any light when the lights are switched on.
- An extension pole, monopod or stick on which to mount your bicycle wheel. I used an old wooden table leg and attached the wheel to the leg with a 'L' bracket which I bought from my local hardware store. You just need something that's comfortable to hold as you manoeuvre the wheel. I've seen some people use short bicycle pegs to grip the wheel but this doesn't give you a



TOP

Three Spirographs with a light orb at the end of tunnel. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40 @ 17mm, 78s @ f/4, ISO 400, tripod. Contrast, saturation, clarity and sharpening in Photoshop CS5

ABOVE

Light sphere made with battery operated string lights moved around a centre point to create a ball. The Spirograph was done first. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40mm @ 17mm, f/4 140s, ISO 200, tripod. Curves, contrast, colour balance and sharpening in Photoshop CS5.



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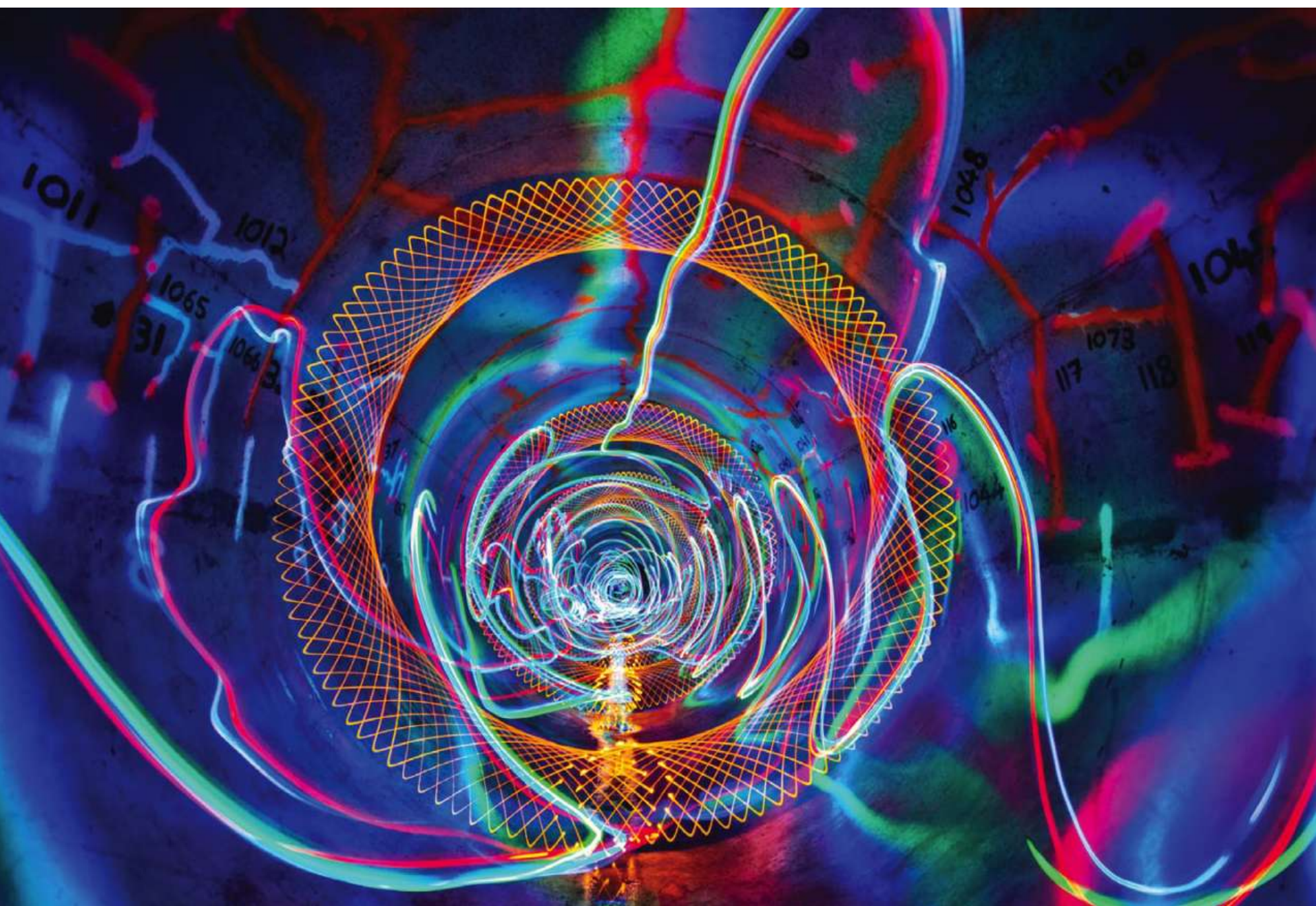
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HOW TO Create Light Paintings



ABOVE

Orange Spirograph light painting with battery operated finger lights used to create an electric atmosphere during a long exposure inside a tunnel. Canon 5D Mk II, 17-40 @ 17mm, 137s @ f/5, ISO 250, tripod. Curves, contrast, colour balance and sharpening in Photoshop CS5.

Safety when light painting

There are a few things you can do to make sure your night photography expeditions are safe and enjoyable. Here are some tips and tricks which have helped me over the years.

1. Research your locations during the day. As I mentioned earlier, it's a good idea to arrive at your location before nightfall. This will give you time to explore your surrounds and make sure there are no hazards like decaying structures, rusty nails or any other obstacles that might be dangerous in the dark.
2. Carry several torches – you can never have enough! I hang one from the centre column of my tripod as a work light and place my bag underneath it. This allows me to see the legs of my tripod and avoid a tripping hazard. Taping a piece of coloured gel (red or blue) over your work light will reduce the chance of light spill. Another way to make your tripod less of a hazard is to wrap a single strip of white electrical tape on the bottom of each of the legs. This will make it easier to see where your tripod is.
3. Wear a head torch. This allows you to light up your work area while keeping your hands free. My head torch has a red light feature, which lets you see what you're doing without diminishing your night vision the way white light does. You can also use this light to paint with, giving your images an entirely different feel.

lot of reach. It's easier and less work if your wheel is modified on a longer pole. It will help you to get to those harder to reach places, like a ceiling. The less running around you do, the more enjoyable and flexible your workflow will be in the field.

Shooting Spirographs

Now you've prepped the wheel you should be ready to test it. Make sure all the lights work and the wheel spins. Do this before arriving at your location; you don't want to be making adjustments in the dark and wasting valuable shooting time. Inside your chosen tunnel you'll need to get into position. For the best and most accurate results the wheel will need to meet at the exact same position after each cycle. I always start at the bottom centre with the lights switched on. Roll the wheel around the tunnel and make sure you meet at the starting point. When you get to the start, switch the lights off as quickly as possible to avoid the wheel showing in your images. Once you've practiced this a few times you should be ready to shoot.

It's a good idea and it makes the process easier by having an assistant or a few friends tagging along for the shoot. Operating the camera and doing the light painting on your own is a lot of work! Ideally, two or three people make it more enjoyable and it's great to collaborate on ideas. My girlfriend and a friend assisted me in creating this Spirograph series. With their help we were able to experiment with various light sources to create more dynamic images that I know would have been impossible if I'd been shooting alone. 🌟



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Angles on Architecture

Capturing buildings and structures in dynamic ways presents some unique challenges for photographers. Rob Ditessa talks to three architectural specialists to find out how they get their amazing images.



Peter Bennetts is interested in how a building fits into its environment, both physically and culturally, and how it responds and gives back to the city or landscape in which it finds itself, rather than the building as an object. He never works on an assignment as a “cold call”. He says he always finds out as much as he can even before seeing a building, in the same way you would do in preparing for a portrait or documentary shoot. He asks for plans, and any construction images which might have been taken. Often, his assignments involve people whose work he

already knows, and he may do a walk around with the architect. He will walk about “to get a feeling of what’s going on, and then it’s pretty much instinctive and reflective. I obviously follow the play of light across a building’s face, but I think firstly about photographing space, and the occupation of space.” A Melbourne-based architectural photographer of 20 years standing, Bennetts’ images have been published in *Condé Nast Traveller* (UK), *Travel & Leisure* (USA), *Time*, *Domus*, *Frame* and *Architectural Review*. His work ranges from Sydney to Perth, and he can find himself in many different shooting

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environments. At the time of writing he had just been on a helicopter shoot photographing Melbourne's CBD. His field is hard work, and there are long days, especially in summer, and at times it can be physically arduous. Nothing happens if you stay at home, and he says young photographers should get out and put themselves in the right place, because fortune most often favours the brave – and hard working!

Another pro, Andrew Krucko, explains his own approach to architectural photography. "There is so much information that I process subconsciously." After 20 years of professional

work and a lifetime of looking at architecture, he says, there is no checklist he works through. It's now instinctual. Even as a youngster, before he was conscious of design, he remembers paying special attention to the stylish residential buildings along Botany Bay's Grand Parade in Sydney, when his family drove along it on their annual holiday trip. On a project, the first thing he notices is how a building resonates within its space, and his response, which is all to do with the basic rules of composition, and design. He will look for where the structure sits best in its environment, so it will be pleasing to

ABOVE

AAMI Stadium, Victoria. Cox Architecture. Photo by Michael Evans. Canon 5D Mk III, 24-105 f/4 L, 2s @ f/8, ISO 100.





the eye when an image is published. The brain hides many things that do not look right, but the camera does not, and he aims to reduce them. To enhance the look of the composition, he will find the best time of day to take advantage of the light, and use the sun as a compositional device.

Michael Evans fell in love with photography while working as the photo archivist in London's Fitch and Company, then the world's biggest commercial and industrial design firm. His first camera was a Nikon F3, and then he bought a Sinar F2 4x5 large-format camera for its quality and tilt-shift capabilities. The projects he has photographed include a Canadian shop selling vodka to the Ukrainians in Kiev, Heathrow Terminal 4, and department stores in Finland. Around 18 years ago he moved to Australia to run a successful architectural photography practice.

He says, "Although this may sound a little clichéd, I am really looking to capture the essence or soul of the building. This really begins with taking a detailed brief from the client, establishing just how the building works and what problems if any that the architect or designer overcame to ensure success. For example, if promoting pedestrian circulation within a space is a perceived issue at the design stage of the building, I will often find myself photographing a 'hero' staircase or escalator system at the project's conclusion. Essentially, I suppose, I see my job as trying to make the finished project look better in print or on the web than it does in real life."

Tips for shooting

Before putting the camera to your eye (and assuming you're not working to a particular client brief) Evans urges a study of the building. He says, "Ask yourself what you like about it, why, and the essence of the building in a close-up detailed image. Just because you can get all of the building in the frame, it does not mean you end up with a better image.

You can get carried away with a building that looks fantastic to the eye and senses, but when you look at the image on the screen you notice the lighting is bland, or there is too much sky, or perhaps the building is now no more than a silhouette. Look for interesting shapes, and most importantly the light. I strongly recommend using an app called 'The Photographer's Ephemeris' when planning an architectural shoot; it gives me the exact light and weather conditions for the site prior to my arrival, allowing me to plan my shot list around the conditions, or if necessary to reschedule."

Krucko says that because architectural photography takes a lot of precision, shooters should avoid using cheap lenses

Michael Evans on capture

"Most of my images are captured with a high dynamic range workflow in mind. I'll often shoot several exposures for a single scene to ensure I've recorded as great a range of shadow mid-tone and high-light detail as possible. Naturally this means for a commercial architectural shoot that I am invariably working with a tripod, which enables me to really stop, look and think. Having shot with a 4x5in large-format camera for many years, I've developed a fast and yet seemingly contradictorily slow-paced approach to ensuring I'm satisfied with the scene prior to releasing the shutter. I always try to get as much right in camera as possible, particularly as many clients struggle to appreciate the time and cost spent in post-production work. Having captured as full a dynamic range as possible I then prefer to manually mask and combine each image in Photoshop for the final output. I have several HDR programs including Photomatix, but, probably because I haven't mastered them, I have never found them to produce subtle and realistic images."

ABOVE

Magney House at Bingie Bingie, near Moruya, NSW.

Architect: Glenn Murcutt. Photo by Andrew Krucko.

"This shot has had extensive post production," says Krucko "I increased contrast and clarity in the RAW file.

The subtle colours were already in the shot. These were increased. The clouds made whiter, the building brighter. Distractions (including trees) were removed." D800, 14-24mm lens @ 18mm, 1/6s @ f/8.

OPPOSITE

Holman House, Dover Heights, NSW, 2011.

Architect: Durbach Block Jagers. Photo by Peter Bennetts.

Alpa Max, HR Digaron-S 28mm f/4.5 Rodenstock HR, Leaf Aptus 75 digital back.

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RIGHT

Islington Silos, Victoria. Architect: Map Architecture and Design. Photo by Michael Evans. "This image was captured using 16 stops of neutral density filters in order to elongate the exposure time to 331 seconds," says Evans. "This produced the dramatic cloud movement I was looking for." Canon 1Ds Mk III, 16-35mm f/2.8 L, 331s @ f/8, ISO 100.

BELOW

New wing, Australian War Memorial, Canberra. Architect: Denton Corker Marshall. Photo by Andrew Krucko. "This is probably my favourite architectural shot of all time," says Krucko. "This was an opportunistic shot with my first digital camera, an Olympus C3000Z. Other than noise reduction, the image was pretty much left alone. This is where the "gods" of light came together at once. I've gone back many a time to get a larger file with a "better" camera, but the light has never been right."



Andrew Krucko's kit

- All Nikon bodies: D800 SLR, 14-24mm, 24mm PC, 24-70mm, 45mm PC
- B&W Filter
- Shutter release cable
- Nikon DR-5 right-angle viewfinder ("for tricky shots!")
- Manfrotto 058B tripod for the ladder shots and an Induro tripod with an Induro Panhead, step ladders and a compass
- Hot Lights: Lowel and a US brand that I imported years ago plus colour correction gels, Black Duvateen for floor reflections and a large silk to put on windows to soften the light!
- Favourite kit: "My tripod head is my favourite piece of kit as it lets me make minute adjustments easily."

which have complex distortions that can't be corrected easily in post-production. Take care with your composition when using a wide-angle lens, because it's difficult to judge whether your lines are perfect. Waiting for the best light is a big part of the job, as is working on dusk and dawn shoots. He urges newer photographers not to rush their jobs. Often you'll see elements like power lines going through the frame, and if they're distracting, he looks to remove them in post-production. If the image is taken for a competition, or a publication, or to sell it, you don't want to misrepresent it, but otherwise you want to make it the best that you can, he says. Bennetts says that often a student will show him work where they have made no judgement about the building being photographed. "Photographing good architecture is easier. Do yourself a favour and photograph the best of the built environment," he says.



Starting out

To start out Bennetts suggests including in your equipment the best tripod you can afford, but nothing fiddly. For lighting, always think about the sun's angles, the play of shadow and time of day. Timing is paramount. Work with a minimum of gear. He explains that in mountaineering terms, he favours 'an alpine-style ascent', taking no more than is self-sustainable, photographing only with what he can comfortably carry for a day, as opposed to a 'siege-style' ascent where you take everything with all the support you might need. Be ready to grasp the opportunity when it pops up, for instance, getting access to a rooftop. You need to take yourself there and shoot with a minimum of fuss. Often an enthusiast will buy a 17mm tilt-shift lens for their architecture work. Bennetts cautions that people should use such a lens carefully because it can distort, exaggerate

and distend a building. It's also manual, and you need to know about metering in a straight axis position and not off axis, and controlling flare. He suggests starting out a fixed 24mm lens, and you can photograph on the street rather than slow yourself down with particular equipment. "It used to be that the only way to correct perspective was with a view camera, and it really dictated when and how you could shoot. You needed a smaller aperture which necessitated longer exposure, and it was very hard to capture any movement", he reflects.

Krucko's equipment list for beginners includes any good DSLR with at least 95% frame coverage for more accurate framing. He suggests coupling it with a wide-angle lens without complex distortions, though some barrel distortion is acceptable as any decent RAW convertor will fix it. A tilt-shift lens is a valuable tool, but expensive. A polarising filter will work for any



Post-production procedures

Michael Evans

“After a shoot all my images are downloaded to my Mac and simultaneously backed up to my Drobo system. This effectively giving me two copies. On a weekly basis my paranoia means that I back up all the week’s work to another external hard drive which I then store offsite. Personally I prefer Adobe Bridge to Lightroom, and as such I use this as my means of choosing and then basically processing and cropping my images in Adobe Camera RAW. I then open as a 16 bit image in Photoshop, and working on a new layer, I fix any convergence issues using the free transform command, rather than using the built-in lens correction tool in ACR. Then after any cloning and healing, and further colour correction and so on, I flatten, and sharpen, having determined the specific usage, since I sharpen for output. I save the final 8 bit image for output to the client.”

Andrew Krucko

“I import with Adobe Bridge, adding relevant metadata and renaming and adding stars. Depending on the image or images, I will open images in Photoshop and do multiple layers of different exposures. I use ACR, Capture One, or the Nikon RAW convertor depending on the file. Lastly I import into Lightroom where I will do any final crop, and export the images for print and web.”

reflections in the glass. A sturdy tripod with a quality head which doesn’t move after it’s adjusted is required, and a step ladder can come in handy. If your camera doesn’t have an inbuilt spirit level, buy one for the hot shoe, he says. For interiors, using hot lights means you can see in real time the effect of the light, as opposed to a bomb flash going off. The idea is to augment the interior lights, and not to overpower them, in such a way that the viewer can’t tell the scene has been lit.

Technical details

Evans says he mainly uses the Canon 5D Mk III as his workhorse, with a Canon 1Ds Mk III as a back-up. His favourite lens is the 17mm TS-E f/4, which he says is superbly sharp from edge to edge. While he rarely uses the tilt function, he appreciates the capability. When he finds that space constriction prevents him from fitting all of a building into one frame, by shifting the lens he can panoramically stitch two or more frames together, and create an image of the building as a whole. “Because I also do a great deal of industrial work in the mining, energy and construction fields, I need the convenience of autofocus and so I also have the 16-35mm f/2.8 L II. I have never found this lens to be particularly sharp in the corners. Indeed it

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LEFT

Nordpark Cable Railway, Innsbruck, Austria. Architect: Zaha Hadid. Photo by Peter Bennets. Alpa 12SWA, HR Digaron-S 28mm/F4.5 Rodenstock HR, Leaf Aptus 75 digital back.

BELOW

Andrew Krucko says, "I like this shot. The file is made up of two exposures, one for the sky and one for the foreground. There has been extensive dodging and burning and it has been cropped." Nikon D300, 12-24mm @ 24mm 1/140s @ f/8, ISO 200.

BOTTOM

Michael Evans says, "This is a four-image linear panoramic stitch. While not strictly speaking an architectural assignment, I was tasked with photographing these mobile kitchens in their environment, just off Collins Street, Melbourne. Since the laneway was very narrow, the only way to include the entire scene without distortion or resorting to a fisheye lens was to photograph it as a linear panorama. This involved capturing a series of images from different viewpoints, as opposed to the traditional method of capturing all frames from a single viewpoint. This produced misalignments when stitching the image, which had to be done manually as there's no effective automated software for this type of panorama. Eventually it all came together in Photoshop." Canon 5D Mk III, 17mm TS-E f/4 L, 0.4s @ f/11, ISO 100.



pales in comparison to the 17mm, and I have recently bought the 16-35mm f/4 L IS and I have found it to be a stellar performer. It certainly outperforms the f/2.8 version in terms of sharpness and flare resistance. The other lenses in my kit are a 24-70mm f/2.8 L II, a 50mm f/1.2 L, a 85mm f/1.2 L, a 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS II, and a rarely used 24-105mm f/4 L."

In filters, he prefers the Lee filter system. Although it isn't cheap, he has always found it to be versatile and high quality. He explains, "I use the 0.9 Soft-Edge Graduated Neutral Density Filter to hold back the skies, and I often combine this with the 105mm circular polarising filter, although this does cause a degree of vignetting on the 16-35mm at anything below 18-20mm. Trying to use filters on the 17mm TS-E is, of course, a challenge with such a protruding front element. However, the best option I have found is manufactured by Photodiox WonderPana, which allows me to use slide-in filters."

His main tripod is the Really Right Stuff TVC-34L which he combines with the RRS BH-55 LR Ballhead. He finds this carbon-fibre kit to be very lightweight but extremely sturdy, particularly as it doesn't have a central column. He's found using the central column on his other tripods the cause of soft images. The 5D Mk III includes an internal spirit level which he



“The best way to deal with the issue of perspective when using a tilt-shift lens is always in-camera.”



finds useful. Because in the past he found the hotshoe-mounted bubble spirit level was another piece of kit to carry and lose, he is fond of the built-in version.

With an interest beyond architecture, Evans owns a relatively large lighting kit which he is able to take on location. This includes the Elinchrom Ranger Quadra, and Bowens Monoblocs. “Having said that, I tend to use the Canon Speedlites 600 Ex-RT system when photographing interiors. I love the fact that they produce a reasonable light output in a small, easy to conceal package. I trigger these using the ST-E3-RT transmitter, which does offer TTL capability, although I always find myself using the flashes in manual mode. I also carry a brace of PocketWizard flash triggers which I can use as a backup system if for some reason the ST-E3-RT fails,” says Evans. He uses ThinkTank and Lowepro bags.

Camera settings

Across all his lenses, Bennetts says his default setting is an aperture pretty much between $f/5.6$ and $f/8$. Mostly he uses manual exposure and for the Leaf camera he sets ISO 100, while for the Canon 1DX ISO 200, 400, or 800. Krucko says, “I like to shoot auto white balance and use a grey card for post colour neutralisation. I always use the base ISO. An aperture of $f/8$ works in 95% of situations, but I’ll go to $f/11$ if pressed, and I bracket the exposure for each shot.” Evans says with aperture, he tends to work in the range of between $f/8$ and $f/11$ because he wants the sharpest possible image without the degradation caused by diffraction. When depth of field becomes a problem, he will often shoot single scenes focusing across different points and then blend the resulting images together in Photoshop to produce one that exhibits front-to-back sharpness. Shooting in RAW, he says, gives him control over the white balance. While he doesn’t bother to set a particular white balance on camera on location, he always uses a colour checker and photographs himself holding it under the light sources as an accurate point of reference. “I make a guess of the initial exposure since the 17mm TS-E plays havoc with the on-camera metering when shift is applied. I work in manual mode anyway, and so I simply adjust the exposure based on my test image histogram. I know some photographers swear by a hand-held light meter, but I have the Sekonic L-308B and I haven’t used it in years,” he adds.

Straightening lines

The best way to deal with the issue of perspective when using a tilt-shift lens, says Evans, is always in camera. “I still tweak the image in post-production if necessary using the free transform command, but it’s important to remember that in doing so the software is essentially making up extra pixels in order to alter the image. On a small scale this isn’t a problem, but it is

LEFT

La Trobe Institute for Medical Science, Victoria. Architect: Lyons. Photo by Michael Evans. Canon 5D Mk III, 17mm TS-E $f/4$ L, $1/160s$ @ $f/8$, ISO 200.

OPPOSITE

National Centre for Synchrotron Science, Victoria. Architect: Bates Smart. Photo by Peter Bennetts. Alpa STC, HR Digaron-S 28mm/ $F4.5$ Rodenstock HR, Leaf Aptus II-10 digital back.

important to be aware that it will ultimately impact on image quality if you apply it too liberally.” Krucko agrees about the advantages of doing everything in camera, and says having a camera with built-in spirit levelling has been a great advantage. He will tilt up a little bit and then fix it in post production, but if he gets to the point where the amount of tilt will cause the post to get out of hand, he will simply seek another position for the camera. Bennetts sums up, “I’m always concerned with the natural representation of the built environment, and getting it right in camera without overt dramatisation. Perspective should be natural. It needn’t be absolutely correct, but if you’re going for a photograph with one point perspective, get it right in the camera with perspective correction. Don’t rely on post.” Bennetts reflects, and echoes the sentiments of Evans and Krucko, “It’s an incredible privilege to see what I do on a daily and weekly basis. If you’re photographing in other genres you don’t get to experience private homes like I do, or the opening of an art gallery, or a new building. It’s all I can do. I’ve never done anything else. I always consider myself to be so lucky for the opportunities where I get to see a bit of the wider world, and see the vanguard of architecture and design.” 🌟



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Into the Wild

From the Top End to Tasmania's Tarkine, Australia is blessed with an abundance of stunningly photogenic vistas. In this special feature, Brent McKean asks 11 pro photographers to name their favourite locations along with their best tips for outdoor photography.



Jabiru, Kakadu
National Park. Nikon
D3s 70-200mm lens,
1/250s @ f/8, ISO 700.
Photo by Steve Parish.



Australia has around 500 national parks. That accounts for over 28 million hectares of raw, mostly untamed wilderness. That's a lot of ground to cover, particularly if you're hoping to find the best photo locations and you only have a few weeks leave in which to do it! Here's a shortcut for you. We tracked down 11 very talented pro photographers and asked them to name their favourite places to visit with a camera. We also asked them how they go about creating their amazing images. Now, that should save you some time – and help you get some fantastic images next time you head out into the great outdoors!



Steve Parish

Steve Parish is an iconic Australian nature and landscape photographer who publishes photography books and runs workshops. Parish's favourite wilderness area is NT's Kakadu National Park (parksaustralia.gov.au), which he has visited every two to three years since 1976. Parish says what makes Kakadu so special is its seasonality, the abundance of wildlife and the diversity of its ecosystems. Kakadu has the largest

number of macropod (kangaroos and wallaby) species in any one place in Australia and it also features enormous bird and reptile diversity.

Parish says the indigenous cultural connection also makes this area very special for him. "The range of natural features within Kakadu makes it a spectacularly exciting region to behold and photograph. The major geological feature is the Arnhem Land Plateau – an ancient sandstone formation which takes up about a third of Arnhem Land. This imposing plateau and escarpment is part of the "stone country" and it is here, on the eastern side of the park, that Kakadu's most unusual plant and animal life can be found."

Steve Parish's Top Tips

1. Use a tripod as much as you can.
2. Mentally get out of your technological head space and into the creative heart-space where your true creative spirit lives.
3. Make many exposures around a theme and play with focus and composition.
4. Vary your viewpoint to suit the angle of the sun's rays, searching for form, texture and shape clarification.

– steveparish.com.au



Richard I'Anson

Over the last 30 years Richard I'Anson's photos have appeared in numerous publications including Lonely Planet travel guides. Richard's favourite wilderness area is Northern Australia, from the Kimberley in Western Australia to Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory.

"It's a huge area and it offers an incredibly wide variety of travel experiences and subject matter with its remarkable landscapes, wildlife, indigenous culture and rock art," says I'Anson. "The area has a wonderful range of natural features including dramatic rock formations and escarpments like the Bungle Bungles, Hidden Valley, Keep River and Arnhem Land; gorges like Galvans, Lennard River and Geikie, waterfalls like Jim Jim Falls and Twin Falls and wetlands such as Bamurru and Kakadu."

Richard I'Anson's Top Tips

1. Take control of the picture-taking process by learning the technical stuff so you can take your camera off the automatic settings.
2. Consider your subject – what is it and why are you taking a photo of it? Successful images have a point of interest: the key

element around which the composition is based and which draws and holds the viewer's attention.

3. Don't assume that your eye level or the first place from where you see your subject is the best viewpoint. A few steps left or right, going down on one knee or moving to higher ground or even just standing on a rock can make a lot of difference.
4. Don't put your camera away when it's raining or threatening to rain. Unsettled or unusual weather often brings with it moments of spectacular light.
5. Learn to see the transformative power of light and its ability to change a landscape from the ordinary to the extraordinary. This is one of the most powerful tools at the photographer's disposal. – richardianson.com/slide-shows/australia-bamurru-plains-photographic-safari/

Wild Bush Luxury runs Bamurru Plains, a luxury lodge that allows photographers and nature lovers the chance to get up close and personal with this stunning landscape and its flora and fauna. The lodge features 10 safari bungalows and plenty of excursions including 4WD and river boat trips and a wealth of wildlife viewing options. For more info on Bamurru Plains visit www.wildbushluxury.com

ABOVE

Sunrise from Etheridge Ridge, Kosciuszko NP. Nikon D700, 20mm f/2.8 lens, 1/25s @ f/11, ISO 500, hand held. Photo by Mike Edmondson.

OPPOSITE

Shooting wetlands on private property at Bamurru Plains, Top End Northern Territory. Canon 1Dx, EF 70-200mm f2.8 lens, 1/400s @ f16, ISO 400. Photo by Richard I'Anson.



“It’s a landscape you have to work at and visit in different seasons. As you spend the time, you begin to shoot past the obvious...”



Ken Duncan

Ken Duncan is one of Australia’s most famous landscape photographers and he also runs photo tours. Ken Duncan’s favourite wilderness area is the Red Centre, especially around the MacDonnell

Ranges near Alice Springs (parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au).

“This is classic Australian outback country, but it has many facets,” says Duncan. “It’s a landscape you have to work at and visit in different seasons. As you spend the time, you begin to shoot past the obvious and find the secret nooks and crannies.”

He continues, “Every time I go out there, my Aboriginal friends show me some new location. It’s beautiful mountainous sandstone country with spinifex, white ghost gums, oases and gorges, and lots of rich red earth.”

After spending so much time in Central Australia Ken Duncan says he has a real connection with the local Aboriginal communities which he says are like family to him, so he has set up a foundation called ‘Walk a While’ (www.walkawhile.org.au). It has been designed to equip the young people in remote communities with tools and skills in creating stories so they can tell these stories into the future.

Ken Duncan’s Top Tips

1. Don’t be seduced by the obvious. Be prepared to peel back the layers to get to the heart of an area. This comes not by rushing but by spending time.
2. Great photos come out of relationships – with the land and the people. If you take time to get to know the indigenous people and you’re not there just to “take” photos, but you’re willing to put back, photo opportunities will open up for you.
3. Learn to feel the land, sense its moods and movements, and understand the weather patterns. Then you will be able to recognise the decisive moment to take photos. This is hard for many, as they’re so in control they’re not willing to explore that esoteric dimension.
4. Get it right in the field. Don’t rely on Photoshop to fix your mistakes!
5. Slow down, think about what you’re doing and don’t over shoot. Bad composition is something you definitely can’t rectify in Photoshop.

– kenduncan.com



Mike Edmondson

Mike Edmondson has been photographing the Australian Alps in all seasons for over 30 years. He is yet another fan of Kosciuszko’s dramatic landscape. Winters and summers in

Kosciuszko National Park have been a part of his life since he was three. Last winter he spent over 30 nights camping in the snow, teaching clients snowcraft and guiding photographers to his favourite locations. In summer he completed many trips for personal photography, guided clients to the 10 highest peaks in



Kosciuszko National Park or led photographic tours to special scenic spots in the region.

He says, “I love the amazing granite tors, swathes of alpine flowers, pristine alpine lakes and tarns, colourful ancient twisted snow gums, tall mountain ash forests, historic huts. It has all the seasons added in, sometimes all in one day!”

Mike Edmondson's Top Tips

1. Be up early for the sunrise and wait for the setting sun for the best light of the day.
2. Be flexible, respectful and open to nature and the ever-changing environment. Connect with these forces to direct you where to explore and photograph.
3. Always have a camera with you – pocket sized or large, with extra batteries – you never know what opportunities might come up.
4. Travel safely with Gore-Tex tops and bottoms, a Personal Locator Beacon, a satellite phone, down jacket, thermals, map, compass and experience.
5. Take a small notepad and write up in black pen how you made each shot. After looking at them on a computer or developing your film, go through with a red pen and mark what worked, what didn't and what to try next time. This will reinforce what you've learned and what areas you need to work on.

mikedmondson.com.au



Darran Leal

Darran Leal is the owner of photo tour company World Photo Adventures, now celebrating 26 years of operation. Leal's favourite wilderness area is the wilds of the

Kimberley region in northwest WA (parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au).

“It's a location that gets my heart pumping,” he says. “Rivers and creeks cut through rocks that can be over two billion years old. The area has so many red cliffs, gorges and outstanding beautiful locations that you could never shoot them all, or explore them in one lifetime.”

Leal says the Kimberley is rugged and you need a good 4WD to get around, but the trip's worth it. “Nothing beats a hard day's work in thirty-degree heat and you pull up at camp, get a fire going and eat your dinner under the stars. In 1987 I shot a series of star shots (four hour exposures) with special permits I obtained to spend a few nights up in Piccaninny Creek. To this day this is still one of my most outstanding photo experiences.”

Darran Leal's Top Tips

1. Buy the right gear to suit your interests. For the Kimberley I suggest investing in a high-quality super wide-angle lens.
2. It's important ‘keep it simple’ and push yourself to try new techniques. In particular learn about depth of field and low-light shooting.
3. Target unique locations and go at the right times. For the Kimberley, April/May is a great period.
4. Do your homework on the region you have targeted and make sure you have quality time when you get there.
5. Get out and shoot as often as you can. From local beaches to waterfalls, rainforest to desert – all require the same basic techniques, but each will challenge you with subtle differences. It's the ability to understand these differences and apply the right techniques which will help you to produce consistent outstanding images.

– worldphotoadventures.com.au

ABOVE

Namatjira Country.
Linhof Technorama
617 pano format,
72mm lens, Velvia
ISO 50 film, 2
seconds @ f/22.
Photo by
Ken Duncan.



Chris Bray

Chris Bray is an award-winning *Australian Geographic* photographer. Bray's favourite national park is the lesser-known Christmas Island National Park (parksaustralia.gov.au), a remote tropical island in the Indian Ocean located south of Indonesia. Covered by rainforest and surrounded by deep ocean, the island has a rugged limestone coastline, is about 135 square kilometres and is known as "Australia's Galapagos".

"Only about 800 tourists visit this tropical wildlife Mecca each year, and without natural predators, the wildlife is both amazingly bountiful and astonishingly brazen," says Bray.

"The air shimmers with birdlife, the land shifts with an unbelievable variety of crabs (from the millions of famously migratory red crabs to the enormous coconut crabs with their one-metre leg span), and the crystal-clear 28°C waters provide some of the world's best reef snorkelling, with 30 metres and more visibility, resident pods of spinner dolphins and even whale sharks at the right time of year. Add in blowholes, coconut palm-

rimmed turtle nesting beaches, a waterfall, glowing mushrooms and various cave systems. What's not to love?"

Chris Bray's Top Tips

1. Use Google image search. The quickest way to discover some of the best photography vantage points is to simply type "sunset [location]" into Google Image Search.
2. Start shooting before sunrise. Many people think sunrise or shortly after is the best time to start photographing landscapes, incorrectly assuming that before the sun comes up it's too dark for photography. With a tripod and a suitably long exposure, it's almost never too dark to take a photo.
3. Only attach a tripod once you've found the best position. If you start with your camera already attached to your tripod when seeking out new photos, you're always going to limit yourself to convenient tripod placements and heights.
4. Use White Balance creatively. White balance is usually about getting your camera to capture colours correctly. You can, however, deliberately interfere with this colour calibration to



RIGHT

Birdlife on Christmas Island. Canon EOS 1Dx, EF 200-400 f/4 IS USM (@ 343mm), 1/2000s @ f/5.6, ISO 1000. Photo by Chris Bray.

BELOW

Rawsons Pass, Snowy Mountains. Canon EOS 5D Mk II, 70-200mm f/2.8 lens @ 70mm, 15s @ f/11, ISO 200. Photo by Tom Putt.



make your images appear warmer or colder for dramatic effect. Sunrises and sunsets for example, often look much more pleasing if you set your white balance to 'shade', which tricks the camera into applying a little extra red.

– chrisbray.net



Tom Putt

Tom Putt is a professional landscape photographer, photographic educator and workshop leader. Putt's favourite national park is Kosciuszko (nationalparks.nsw.gov.au), which

he particularly loves to shoot in winter. Putt visits the area a few times each year to go backcountry snow camping and he's working on a large-format coffee table book titled *Snow Landscapes of Australia*. Once on top of the range he says the area is relatively flat.

"There are several rocky outcrops, known as Ramshead Range, as well as all the highest peaks in Australia. The sunrises and sunsets have to be seen to be believed. The colours are intense," he says.

However Putt is well aware how quickly the weather can change. "A storm can hit and blow in 100 kilometre an hour plus winds. There's nowhere to hide up there sometimes, so that can present a real danger for the unprepared," he says. "Last year I was stuck in my tent for two days in a storm, waking every few hours in the night to dig myself out. The snow was accumulating around the entrance and I really had no other way out!"

Tom Putt's Top Tips

1. Get out there! Being in the landscape gives you the best chance of capturing those magical shots.
2. Look for the 'wow' factor – but don't look to make every post a winner! Some landscapes are more spectacular than others. Be an observer first, a photographer second. Some things are better admired than photographed. When you say to yourself, "wow!" that's the time to pull out the camera.
3. Magical light makes for magical images. The two go hand-in-hand. Wait for the magical light and you'll be halfway there.



ABOVE

Moss-covered tree, Philosopher Falls, Tarkine wilderness, Tasmania. Olympus OM-D E-M1, Olympus Zuiko 12-40mm f/2.6 lens @ 21mm, f/5.6, ISO 200, tripod. Tone mapped and processed from five raw images in Lightroom CC with Photo Merge. Photo by Leonard Metcalf.

OPPOSITE

Dove Lake, Cradle Mountain. Nikon D800, 14-24mm f/2.8 lens @ 20mm, 30s @ f/16, ISO 100. Photo by Michael Snedic.

4. Keep the composition simple and strong. Too many photographers try to include everything. Be selective – go for three elements only and your images will have more impact.
5. Brush up on your post-production skills. You don't need to spend hours on one image, but you should be fine tuning each one to make it look it's very best. A digital shot straight out of camera is rarely good enough. I use Lightroom for a quick and easy process.

– inspirelandscapes.com



Leonard Metcalf

Len Metcalf runs Len's School, specialising in boutique group photography tours. He says the Tarkine Wilderness Area in northwest Tasmania (www.parks.tas.gov.au) is his favourite place to shoot. Covering around 447,000 hectares, it's widely recognised for its World Heritage significance. "Romantic memories of blockades and green battles litter my memory of the area," says Metcalf. "Unfortunately, despite its rich environmental significance and recent conservation gains, most of it remains available for mining and logging."

However there's still plenty to experience and photograph – even in the constant rain! "The weather in the Tarkine is decidedly wet – roughly two metres of rain each year!" says Metcalf. "But I love to photograph the rainforest in the wet. I consistently get good diffused light, the most amazing natural lush greens and locations void of human activity. The wild and rugged coastline is another visual delight which is icing on the cake for me." He says the rainforest on the edge of the Pieman River is a favourite spot, "There are ancient Huon pines at the water's edge and celery tops sticking out of the canopy which make for stunning images in the mist."

Leonard Metcalf's Top Tips

1. Walking and finding the best location to take your photograph is the most important aspect of landscape composition.
2. The best light can be quiet nebulous. Wet weather, mist and overcast skies are really helpful in the rainforest as then you don't have blown-out highlights to distract the viewer's eyes away from the most interesting subject matter.
3. Tripods and live-view shooting help me to slow down and compose deliberately. I love wandering around and firing off

hand-held shots, but in many situations they aren't as good as when I slow down and use my tripod.

4. Study art and photography. Both the technical and the visual. Look at photographs every day. Don't just glance at them, study them and figure out why you like them or don't.
5. Mentors and teachers. Find a photographic mentor who can teach you and help you get to the next level. Go on workshops and photographic tours, join a photographic group or club, or find a photo friend.

— lensschool.com



Michael Snedic

Michael Snedic is a professional nature photographer and adventure tour operator. Snedic says it's difficult to go past Tasmania's Cradle Mountain (www.parks.tas.gov.au) for

sheer natural beauty. He says photographing a sunrise or sunset there is a photographer's dream.

"This is an incredible mountain range, with a beautiful lake in the foreground. On a still day, the mountain reflects perfectly in the lake and when there are clouds lit up by a fiery sunrise or sunset, it's pure magic."

Snedic has made well over 20 attempts at photographing sunrise and sunsets at Cradle Mountain and Dove Lake.

"Each and every time is different and the mood on the day changes all the time. That's why I go back over and over again," Last year, I was fortunate to photograph the Aurora Australis, directly over Cradle Mountain, with reflections in Dove Lake. It was a once-in-a-lifetime moment."

Michael Snedic's Top Tips

1. Photographing a rainforest is best done on an overcast day. Overcast weather creates even, diffused lighting which makes for nicer rainforest and waterfall images.
2. Shoot with your widest aperture for better images of a single wildlife species. When hand-holding a larger lens, the widest aperture gives a higher shutter speed and less chance of shooting a blurry image.
3. Know your camera inside out! Get to know your camera settings really well so that when a situation presents itself, you're ready to take the shot.



4. Observing wildlife behaviour is the key to getting great 'action' shots. If you watch the animal closely it will often help you predict how it will move.
5. Tripods and remotes are essential for good sunrise and sunset images. Using a remote or cable release also stops any movement otherwise caused by pressing the shutter button with your finger, especially in very low-light conditions.

— michaelsnedic.com



Dean Cooper

Dean Cooper is a professional landscape photographer specialising in seascapes and long exposures. Cooper's favourite national park is Victoria's famous Wilsons Promontory (parkweb.vic.gov.au) on that state's southeast coast, which he says is in a class of its own. Dean runs workshops there and says it offers

unlimited photographic options.

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ABOVE

The Kimberley offers unique landscape photo opportunities, with Purnululu National Park one of the best in the world. Manual Mode, 16-35mm lens @ 38mm, 1/350s @ f/11, ISO 400, hand held, processed in Lightroom. Photo by Darran Leal.

RIGHT

Whiskey Bay, Wilsons Prom NP. Canon 5D Mk II, Voigtlander 20mm lens, 20s @ f/16, ISO 100. Photo by Dean Cooper.

OPPOSITE

Lord Howe Island. Canon EOS 6D, 24-70mm f/2.8 lens @ 24mm, 1/400s @ f/9, ISO 100. Photo by Luke Hanson.



“There are three main small bays which are perfect to photograph. Each has its own set of very photogenic rocks. There are also a couple of islands just offshore and these make a great addition to any composition. Place them in the frame for the viewer’s eye to be led there and you’ll have a winning image.” Cooper is also a fan of “The Prom’s” ever-changing weather.

“A front will whip up from the Southern Ocean and then it’s all on. It is a wild piece of coastline to say the least. If you want to go there, try the cooler months of the year. The Prom to me is all about capturing seascapes with mood and you might not get that in summer with a blue sky day.”

Dean Cooper’s Top Tips

1. Try using prime lenses. If you don’t have one then shoot at specific focal lengths. I use three lenses – 20mm, 25mm and 40mm – and I use the 25mm 90 per cent of the time.
2. Don’t try and get everything in. Put the blinkers on and hone into some strong elements which will create a strong composition.
3. Keep it simple! This will force you to look harder and make something out of what’s in front of you. Look for shapes or things that stand out and make that your feature.
4. Allow some time for your skills to develop. We are all at different levels so be aware of your level, when you have reached it, and then push on to the next level.
5. Be organised and prepared. If you head out for a morning shoot and it’s 3°C and you left your beanie and jacket at home you will hate every minute of it! And that organisation goes for your gear too!

– deancooper.com.au



Luke Hanson

Luke Hanson, owner of Pinetrees Lodge (pinetrees.com.au) on Lord Howe Island, runs wilderness photography courses. You don’t need to look too far to find natural beauty when you live on a tropical island in the Pacific, one described by

naturalist Richard Attenborough as “so extraordinary it is almost unbelievable...” Hanson says he loves the island’s variety of colours, textures, structures and life forms.

“There were no indigenous people on Lord Howe, so without 40,000 years of burning and landscape change, the place feels raw and rich,” says Hanson.

He continues, “You can walk off-track in the remote parts of the park and know that you’re probably the first person to go there, and the feeling of discovery makes photography exciting. Probably the best weeks of the year are the photography weeks we run at Pinetrees.”

Luke Hanson’s Top Tips

1. Combine strong compositional lines, tonal contrast and saturation with scale and drama. You need to find a landscape that deserves a photo, and then find a subject or focal point.
2. Play around with some compositions and see what works, and then you have to hurry up and wait – sometimes for hours!
3. Be patient. Light changes slowly and clouds (think tonal contrast) are continually evolving. But just imagine how your photo will look when you have a beam of light on your subject, surrounded by darker tones.
4. Look to include movement to create drama. Capturing action is a great way to get that ‘wow’ factor in your shots. 🌟



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Top Gear

Check out these brilliant suggestions to make sure your next adventure in the great outdoors is safe, fun and comfortable!



Outdoor Research Deviator Hoody

Outdoor Research's Deviator Hoody provides a good mix of airflow and warmth. With an average weight of 305g (L), this new hoody is lightweight, quick drying and breathable, with flat seam construction and a handy odour control system. The Polartec Alpha insulation with Hybrid Mapped construction dries quickly, retains warmth and circulates airflow around the torso for breathability when you're on the move. The Deviator Hoody retails for \$229.95.

intertrek.com.au

ImageView digital binoculars

A good pair of binoculars can help you hone in on distant subjects you want to shoot. And these ones combine long-distance optical performance with a digital camera. The ImageView digital binoculars let you shoot distant images with clarity using the 8x optics. It's compact enough to fit into a pocket (388gm) and it can shoot 12-megapixel stills and HD video. Retail price is \$399.

tasco.com.au



Klean Kanteen drink bottles

This new range of bottles from Klean Kanteen integrates the original, classic bottle design with a high-performance, double-wall vacuum insulation to keep your drinks hot – or cold! The Classic Vacuum Insulated bottles come in various colours and sizes, from the easy-to-stow 355ml to the thirst-quenching 1892ml. The insulated range can keep tea or soup hot for up to 12 hours, or ice water and juices cold for up to 24 hours. Prices start from \$39.95.

zenimports.com.au

Lorpen Tri Layer All Season Trekker socks

When it comes to bushwalking your socks are every bit as important as your shoes. Made for wandering feet, this sock is suitable for exploring rugged terrain throughout the warmer months. These socks will keep your feet cool, fresh, dry and blister-free with their seamed stitch-by-stitch lining. Only \$35.

sherpa.com.au



Scarpa Oxygen GTX shoes

Designed for mixed terrain, Scarpa's Oxygen GTX is a comfortable shoe designed for long bushwalks. The Oxygen's elastic collar makes for an immediately comfortable fit, meaning the dreaded 'wear-in' process is shortened, minimising the chance of blisters. A suede water resistant and mesh upper helps keep feet dry without locking out air flow. And Gore-Tex Surround technology enables the Oxygen to breathe well enough for use in warmer climates. Oxygen GTX shoes retail for \$289.95.

outdooragencies.com.au



Gondwana men's Bulmer Active fleece

If you're shooting in the cold, this fleece will help you stay warm and keep shooting for longer. The Bulmer Active fleece is moisture wicking, breathable, quick drying and lightweight, offering shooters plenty of comfort. Made out of 100 per cent polyester, this fleece has high stretch capabilities and is machine washable for easy care. It costs \$70.

gondwanaoutdoor.com.au

Gerber Dime

Gerber's pocket-sized Dime multi-tool is a compact and lightweight utility gadget weighing 62gm and featuring 10 individual tools. For quick DIY fixes, there are two screwdrivers, a flat-head and Phillips-head, as well as spring-loaded pliers and wire cutters for precision cutting. There's also a fine-edge blade, spring-loaded scissors and a package opener for getting into diabolically difficult plastic packaging! The pocket-sized tool measures just over 10cm when it's open and just over 6cm when closed. It costs \$34.95.

au.gerbergear.com



Sherpa Polypro base layer top

Providing lightweight warmth at an affordable price, the long sleeve Polypro base layer is ideal for bushwalking and kayaking. It allows your body to retain its natural heat and keeps you dry because polypropylene doesn't absorb moisture. Fresh and quick drying, this material is exceptionally soft, even though it's not made of more traditional cotton fabric. You can get it online and in stores for \$34.95.

sherpa.com.au



KTI Safety Alert PLB

If you're going bush it's always worth taking a PLB (personal locator beacon). If you ever get lost, or you or one of your party is injured and can't walk back, then a PLB will get rescuers to you quickly. The pocket-sized KTI Safety-Alert weighs 140g, is GPS-equipped, and features a class-leading 10-year battery life. Other features include a high-intensity photo-flash LED and a camera-style carry pouch. It retails for \$299.

kti.com.au

Kathmandu 25L Wayfarer day pack

This day pack combines a classic top-loading style with digital integration. A quick access touch screen window (attached to a pocket storing your iPad or something similar) allows you to connect to technology on the go – read maps, check train schedules or update social media. The one kilogram pack also features a breathable, adjustable APS (Air Pod System) harness which has four raised pods used on the back panel for increased airflow. And there's plenty of room for basic camera gear. It sells for \$179.98.

kathmandu.com.au



Marmot Windridge short sleeve tee

To accommodate the heat during summer hikes, this t-shirt features breathable mesh panels to help ventilate the summer sweats. Made from a lightweight performance knit fabric, the Windridge is quick-drying and moisture wicking, with flat-locked seams for extra comfort. It's also ideal to wear under a rain jacket or soft-shell jacket which will help users stay warm and dry. You'll find it for \$39.95.

marmotaustralia.com.au

On The Tea Road

Can you take a different approach to enhance your travel photography? While touring through Sri Lanka Robert Keeley developed a photojournalistic theme and shot to his own brief.

Travel broadens the mind, and for photographers it equally broadens their field of creative options. There's nothing better than hitting a foreign shore and getting out and about to shoot new and unusual subjects. The different locations and material will stretch your thinking, but after a while it can become a challenge once again to come up with something new. Every scenic vista and church, skyscraper, or bridge can start to take on a certain sameness. The images you shoot will still have significance to you and your family and friends, but perhaps they will hold less interest to a wider viewing audience. One familiar solution to this dilemma is to create a theme. It can be anything from doors (quite a subject in European villages) to rivers, the locals, or even native fauna. This can provide a better focus and it usually works to retain the interest of uninvolved viewers for a while.

But I'd argue there is a stronger, more sustaining approach available which is also worth trying – set some parameters for your own photojournalistic assignment. Arranging your own task and shooting within its restrictions can be a great discipline. It requires a higher level of engagement than simply shooting holiday snaps, and you'll be working under the pressure of your own deadline. If you're overseas it will also be difficult to get back to the location you're operating in and that will create its own pressures. In short, coming up with your own assignment can offer some really challenging restrictions for your photography which will force you to think differently about what you shoot and how you go about it.



For me this opportunity arose on a recent trip to Sri Lanka. The purpose of my trip was to shoot an Under 17s cricket tour by a private tour group. The trip involved five games of cricket over two weeks, and as a direct consequence our touring party of 23 people (adults and young people) spent considerable periods of time either watching or playing cricket (most games took a day), or travelling by bus to various destinations. As the Sri Lankan road system is short on freeways and long on narrow winding country roads (usually with on-coming traffic heading straight towards you!) we spent an inordinate amount of time driving, and times for local exploration were limited.

However, one afternoon, after driving up the long, treacherous, and spectacular winding road which runs 85km between the regional capital of Kandy (at 500m) and the



commercial tea centre of Nurawa Eliya (1868m) in the high country of central Sri Lanka, we arrived a little early. So I took the chance to hire one of the local Tuk Tuks (little three-wheeled motorised vehicles which can carry three passengers) to drive back down that scenic and dramatic road.

It winds and twists precipitously upwards through prime tea-growing country, with the surrounding hills sown dense with waist-high deep green plants. But there's a lot more to this bucolic setting. Tea factories are dotted at regular locations up the road selling neatly boxed products to tourists, and spread around those factories (which are often identified by huge signs planted on the hillsides of their commercial properties) are the villages and shanty homes of the workers who service them. The workers are a mix of Tamil and Sinhalese origin, some brought to the country by the

British who set up the tea industry in this region around the mid 1800s. Along the roadside there are small stalls operated by locals, who mostly get themselves up or down the road by walking. With huge billboards also decorating each side of the road, I felt this was a region ripe for a photojournalistic shoot. An added bonus was the extraordinarily rainy, dark, and threatening skies which predominated as I travelled along the road. It offered saturated colours and extra 'punch' to my landscapes. Here's how I tackled my assignment, with some pointers towards how you might do it.

Pre-shoot preparation

If you plan to tackle a photojournalistic assignment, it's important to undertake some degree of preparation beforehand. This can involve anything from extensive reading about your intended

ABOVE

I captured these locals at a small stall, sheltering from the persistent drizzle. They had no objections to me photographing them, and I showed them the images afterwards.

Canon EOS 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 18mm, 1/60s @ f/3.5, ISO 800, -0.3EV.



destination (history, commercial and political activity), to a thorough examination of websites to check out any existing imagery. In my own case, commitments before my travel had unfortunately meant my investigations were limited to buying and then partly reading a Lonely Planet volume on Sri Lanka! But I had one lucky break, in that the Kandy Road/PBC Highway was the path we chose to take to drive into the former colonial outpost of Nuwara Eliya.

Nuwara Eliya came to European attention when British doctor John Davy discovered it in 1819, but over the next 20 years it developed as a place of rest and recuperation for the British colonialists who worked in Sri Lanka's surrounding tropical lowlands. It still has a slight colonial tinge to some of its architecture, along with its drizzly, cool climate!

In a sense my preparation was driving up the road and seeing its photographic potential. The serendipitous nature of travel opens you up to possibilities at short notice, so you have to be prepared to adapt. If a subject has photographic potential, you can research it further at your accommodation, or adjust your plans to stay around. Obviously, reading about and discovering images of certain locations before you leave is the best approach, but it's not always an option that's available. So learn all you can about your destination, but stay alert to changing possibilities.

Arrange your themes

Of necessity photojournalists have to shoot opportunistically, and basically be ready for anything. But that doesn't mean they shouldn't go into any assignment without some idea of the parameters they want to work within. For my self-assigned project my first drive to the top the rain-soaked mountain range suggested a number of themes, including the landscape itself (dramatic and often shrouded in mist and drizzle), the workers and stall holders lining the roadside (of which there were many), the traffic (hair-raisingly close and often battered and colourfully decorated), and of course, the tea factories which dominated the countryside. Once those themes were identified, I had to make sure I covered off on them. That's where the opportunistic nature of the task came to the fore.

Practical shooting

You can do all the preparation in the world, but photojournalistic shooting requires adaptability to the circumstances in which you find yourself. My own assignment confronted immediate issues as soon as I'd arranged a tuk tuk and driven over Top Pass, the highest point on the road, and begun my descent. My plan involved travelling most of

HOW TO Shoot Travel Photojournalism

LEFT

The stores in Nuwara Eliya were small and packed with a variety of products. This toy store also sold a collection of other paraphanelia jammed into its shelves. Canon EOS 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 16mm, 1/40s @ f/7.1, ISO 800, -1.3EV.

BELOW

Children lined the highway selling flowers to any tourists who would accept them. They were happy to pose for photos, and I paid them a small sum for their cooperation. Canon EOS 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 23mm, 1/320s @ f/2.8, ISO 400, +2.3EV. Brightness adjusted.



“You can do all the preparation in the world, but photojournalistic shooting requires adaptability...”

the way down the highway to a location where there were two waterfalls which might have offered landscape potential, It was around an hour and a half to that location. Then I would turn back with the advantage of having already covered the territory and (hopefully) being able to spot chances I’d missed the first time. With its open sides my tuk tuk was a fantastic (if somewhat wet and airy) vehicle to attempt this difficult drive; it was relatively slow and I could simply tap the driver on the shoulder if I wanted to stop. He couldn’t always find a roadside pullover to stop immediately, but he was nimble enough to find somewhere close by. However, my first problem arose straight away when we crested the mountain top and drove directly into a wall of misty drizzle, which soon turned to dense rain. Disaster! Outdoor shooting is always subject to the vagaries of

the weather and in fact I had considered the poor weather as an element I wanted to shoot (just not as zero-visibility rain!). In such circumstances I had no choice but to push on. It was mid-afternoon and I had a limited period of reasonable light, and I’d anticipated (correctly as it turned out) that the weather was so changeable that it was likely the rain would soon clear.

Looking for people The PBC Highway was what military strategists might call a “target-rich environment”. The rain cleared and I shot some early landscapes with swirling mist rolling over the rock-strewn hill tops, but I kept my eyes open for both workers and stall holders. Opportunities soon presented themselves. Shooting locals requires consideration and caution, and it will vary from country to country. In some regions the locals may be indifferent or even hostile to photographers,

HOW TO Shoot Travel Photojournalism

RIGHT

I stopped at a Hindu temple I noticed off the road. The dark, moody lighting matched the intricate, detailed architecture. Canon 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 21mm, 1/320s @ f/2.8, ISO 320, -0.3EV.

BELOW

At different points along the road I stopped our tuk tuk and asked locals if I could photograph them. Many were happy to assist. Canon 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 30mm, 1/400s @ f/4, ISO 400, +1EV.



and you'll need to exercise common sense and caution. But in Sri Lanka the locals are friendly and mostly open to photography. As we drove down the highway if I spotted an interesting face I'd get my driver to stop and I would ask if I could take a photo.

Most people obliged. If they refused I would say 'thanks' and back off. In the frequently drizzling conditions I was using a wide-angle lens (16-35mm) so I didn't shoot any candid images from a distance.

In a country like Sri Lanka I also found there were many opportunities to shoot young people, and while I didn't overdo this, it was great to be able to photograph a cross-section of the population. I stopped at stalls and when people were selling flowers from the roadside.

I stopped when locals were simply walking along the roadside, and at one point I called on my driver to pull out at a small village for the workers on the plantations. I spent some time shooting there as they allowed me, and also at a Hindu temple next door. With the wide-angle lens I got in close to people, using a high ISO setting to compensate for the overcast conditions, and focusing as much as possible on the eyes. Of course, this style of shooting allows for only very limited opportunities as it's potentially intrusive and you can lose the spontaneity of your subject. I aimed to shoot three or four frames of people in quick succession, although if the subject was comfortable I might shoot a couple more, bracketing (shooting slightly above and below the indicated exposure) to cover my options.



Landscapes

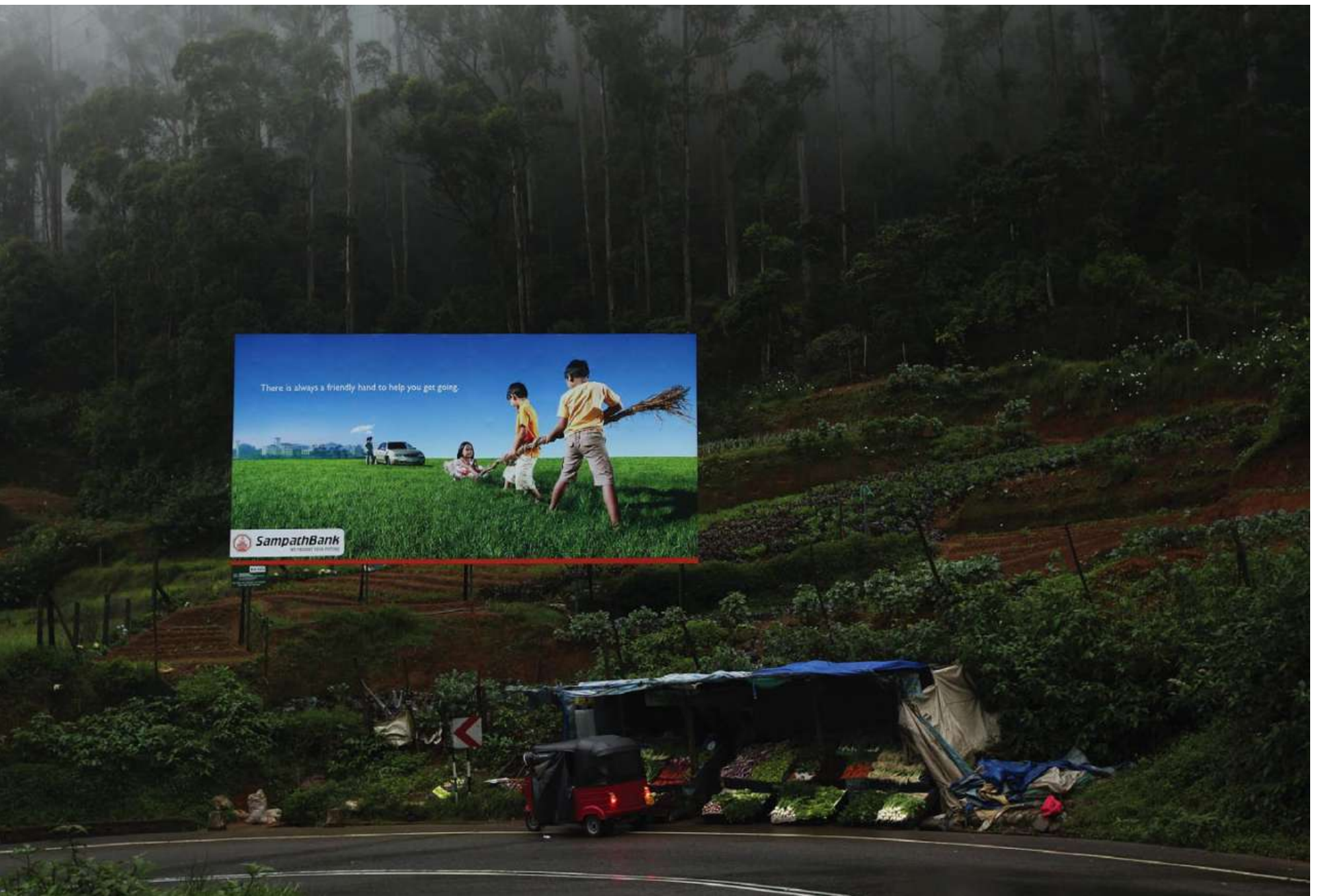
The landscape on this highway was dramatic, with beautiful, deep valleys, small villages, rocky precipices, and constantly rolling rain clouds and swirls of mist intercepting the main features. Occasionally we travelled through stands of pine forests and to add some variety, in the low light I tried shooting using very slow shutter speeds (1/30s or slower). I liked the blurred effect and I got some different shots to mix up my portfolio. It pays to think differently whatever subject you shoot. It might be a total failure, but you might come up with something different and effective. In the more traditional format I broke up my landscapes into images including the tea plantations, the factories, and the wild country (which interestingly included several large stands of tall, narrow eucalypt trees, reminding me of home!). At certain points the rain completely

obscured my surrounds and it was hard enough seeing the road ahead. I shot from the moving vehicle, and I got the driver to stop when I felt it was warranted. Given my tight time frame, although I had a tripod, I only used it once, to shoot waterfalls at the point where I planned to turn around. Those images, though sharp, were nothing out of the ordinary, so the tripod wasn't of much value. It's a personal choice whether you should take on an assignment like this, and I may well have been better off with a monopod because it was more portable and easier to use.

The built environment

As well as the natural landscape, if you're shooting this type of assignment you should keep a close eye on the man-made environment because it can add another dimension to any story

HOW TO Shoot Travel Photojournalism



ABOVE

Huge roadside billboards delivered incongruous messages about luxury items and good times to the workers of the shanty villages dotted around them. Canon EOS 1D Mk IV, 16-35mm lens @ 33mm, 1/500s @ f/3.5, ISO 800.

you're trying to develop. There were lots of opportunities on the Tea Road to shoot man-made structures. I'd photographed many roadside stalls (sometimes with their owners), and I shot a lot of giant billboards which often contrasted dramatically with their surroundings. I photographed the prominent tea factories, and the humble shanties of the workers. But I also kept an eye out for other opportunities, and at one point a diverging track led to a small village with a Hindu temple beside it. I spotted it on the way down and I asked the driver to pull over into it on our way back. It proved to be one of my most productive stops. The village was full of tea plantation workers who lived in a very basic way.

As well as shooting the eerie, rain-soaked temple, I shot several locals a small stall, and then another worker who was unloading items from the back of a produce truck. In all these instances the people did not speak English (though most in Sri Lanka did), so I simply raised my camera and pointed to it and them. If there were no objections I'd take a few frames, and then as a simple courtesy, I'd show them the image. Their reactions varied from mild indifference to genuine interest and appreciation. In my view this is a worthwhile approach to create goodwill and to show the exchange is not a one-way street.

Adding extras

To add further depth to my personal assignment I included images from our visit to a tea factory (primarily designed to sell us some local product!). It was a good opportunity to see

how the tea was processed (amongst machinery which might give our local OH&S officers heartburn!), and when I reached the top of the mountain once again I toured through the local town of Nurawa Eliya to capture the local shops and traders who benefitted from the tea and tourist trade. While not strictly related to the road these images filled out the story I was aiming to tell. In the low light I shot using high ISO settings, and once again I would have benefitted from the use of a monopod, though with careful bracing and extreme wide-angle settings I managed to secure sharp enough images.

The end result was a fairly extensive photographic coverage of this fascinating region, made over a four-hour period. The Kandy/PBC Highway leading into Nurawa Eliya is an area which could reward a couple of months of research and shooting. I'm sure the written stories of those who live there would also make for an interesting essay.

I was fortunate to be able to spend a few hours meeting the locals and exploring their environment, and it was a great way to add depth to my photography on a busy but fruitful overseas trip. If your main priority is to simply shoot some nice holiday snaps and relax, making your own assignment is probably not the way to go. But if you take overseas trips as a chance to improve your craft, designing your own photojournalistic shoot can be a great opportunity to revitalise and sharpen your travel photography, and lift it to a higher level. 🌐

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Panasonic DMC-G7

Like something from a sci-fi movie Panasonic's new G7 can capture moments in time before the photographer presses the shutter button. Anthony McKee puts this unusual camera to the test.

For documentary, sports and even wildlife photographers, capturing “the moment” is everything. Some photographers anticipate the moment, others use the ‘buckshot’ approach at eight-frames-per-second, but now Panasonic has provided photographers with yet a third option. The recently released Panasonic Lumix DMC-G7 camera allows photographers to capture moments that occurred before they actually pressed the shutter release. It’s almost something H.G. Wells might have invented!

The DMC-G7 is a more affordable little brother to the Panasonic GH4, the pro-level Four-Thirds camera that many videographers now use for capturing 4K video. The G7 also captures 4K video, and it is on the back of this feature that Panasonic has added its new 4K Photo capture mode. When “4K Photo” mode is selected, the camera is constantly recording 4K video at 30-frames-per-second to its buffer; the moment a photographer presses the camera’s shutter release, the camera writes the previous one second and the following one second of video to the memory card. From there a photographer can review all 60 frames and decide which one frame would make the best photograph and this image is then saved as an 8.3-megapixel JPEG, along with the short video clip.

There are three different mode settings within 4K photo mode: they are 4K Pre-

Burst, which is described above, 4K Burst mode where the camera records as long as the shutter release is pressed down, and 4K Burst Start/Stop mode, where the recording starts when the shutter is pressed once, and finishes the second time you push the shutter button. In the 4K burst mode you can record up to 29 minutes and 59 seconds of 4K video, assuming you’re happy to search through 53,970 frames to find that perfect moment! What is worth remembering though, is that these modes still require you to have the camera pointing in the right direction to capture the moment, and these modes will also consume battery power at a reasonable pace.

For those of us who can see the action coming, the G7 is prepared for that too. You can capture 16-megapixel stills using the mechanical shutter at 8fps in High Speed AFS mode or 6fps in High Speed AFC mode. Alternatively, you can use the electronic shutter to capture 16MP images at 40fps in Super High Speed mode although the buffer is limited to a maximum of 13 frames in RAW mode. The shutter speed goes from 1/16,000s down to 60 seconds, while the ISO ranges from 25,600 down to ISO 200 or ISO 100 if the extended option is selected.

At 410 grams, the G7 is 150 grams lighter than the GH4, but it maintains the same form factor that is familiar to most small DSLR cameras. The G7 features a 2,360,000-dot built-in OLED electronic viewfinder which is bright and clear to use (even for those like me who wear glasses), as well as a 3in (75mm, 1,040,000-dot) LCD display which is fully articulated. This screen is both touch- and gesture-sensitive; you can touch it to manage menu items, select areas of a scene you want to focus on, and you can also swipe through photos in playback and zoom with your fingers to enlarge images. Like most cameras now, some of the icons are getting too small.

The handgrip of the G7 is deep and comfortable, even for larger hands, while the two command dials are fast and easy to adjust in manual mode. There are two





large dials on the top deck. The left-hand dial provides fast access between the different shooting modes including single and continuous shooting, 4K Photo, auto bracketing, self timer and time lapse/animation modes while the right-hand dial provides fast access to the exposure modes. These include four primary exposure modes (M,S,A,P) as well as Intelligent Auto modes, Scene and Custom modes, Panorama Shot mode, and Creative Photo and Video modes. Perhaps my only complaint with the layout is an excessive number of function buttons (there are five in all); sometimes less is more, particularly if you're pitching a camera at consumers.

The G7 can easily track and focus on a moving subject at frame rates up to 6fps. The focus is snappy in bright conditions, but what is even more impressive is the camera's ability to focus in almost no light. Outside at night, the G7 can easily focus on stars. Combine this with the Timelapse feature on the G7 and it's getting easier than ever to create stunning short films of the southern sky meandering across lonely outback landscapes. Other features include WiFi connectivity to smartphones and tablets, focus peaking and zebra patterns (useful for checking highlights), an external mic, power, HDMI and AV/Digital outputs for added control.

ABOVE

This portrait is proof that smaller sensors no longer struggle in low light. The photograph was made using the 42.5mm f/1.7 Panasonic Lumix lens with the exposure set at 1/60s, f1.7 and a relatively high 1600 ISO. The light source was a low downlight while the back of a menu was used to bounce light into Bo's face. Where is the noise?

Overall, the G7 is an enjoyable camera to use. The camera felt comfortable in my hands, and I enjoyed using the electronic shutter to capture images silently. Image quality is very good for a Four Thirds sensor; and the G7 will produce very acceptable images in low light, even up to ISO 6400. JPEGs and RAW files shot at the lower ISOs are clean and require minimal adjustment.

This camera is a very capable Four Thirds unit which will provide recreational photographers and even professionals with some compelling image capture tools. Many photographers will gravitate to the G7 simply for its 4K video, but this camera is also ideal for sport, action, wildlife, time-lapse and any other task you might throw at it. 🌟

Specifications

Type: Micro Four Thirds interchangeable lens camera

Sensor: 16 megapixels, Four Thirds sensor

Kit lens: Panasonic G-Vario 12-32mm f/3.5-5.6mm Aspherical lens with Mega-OIS

Aspect ratio: 4:3 (native), 3:2, 16:9 and 1:1

Shutter: Mechanical and Electronic. 60 seconds to 1/16,000s

ISO range: 200-25,600 (expandable to ISO 100 - 25,600)

LCD screen: 3in (75mm) 1,040,000-dots LCD Touch Screen

Viewfinder: 2,360,000-dots built-in OLED electronic viewfinder with 17mm eye point

Flash: Built-in pop-up flash (guide number 8.8 at 200-ISO) plus TTL hotshoe

Flash sync: 1/160s of a second and slower

Stills format: JPEG, RAW and JPEG + RAW

Movie format: 4K: 3840 x 2160 (30, 25, 24, 20fps). Full HD: 1920 x 1080 (60, 50, 30, 25fps)

WiFi: Yes, IEEE 802.11b/g/n

Connections: Microphone (3.5mm), Remote (2.5mm), AV Out / Digital (dedicated 8-pin) and Micro HDMI

Battery: Li-ion (7.2V, 1025mAh, 7.4 Wh). Good for 350+ images with rear monitor

Dimensions: 124.9 x 86.2 x 77.4mm (W x H x D)

Weight: 415g with battery and SD card

Price: \$1,099 with 12-32mm Kit lens, or \$1,399 with both the 12-32mm and 35-100mm kit lenses.

Results

HANDLING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Panasonic G7 is a comfortable size and easy to work with in almost any situation. The exposure and capture mode dials along with effective front and rear control dials make the camera easy to adjust. The G7 handles like a DSLR, but it's the fast capture rates of up to 40fps at 16MP, or 30fps in 4K Photo mode that will give the sports and action photographers plenty to gloat about.

FEATURES ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The 4K video on its own will be enough to tempt many keen image makers to this camera; the 4K photo capture mode, reliable focus tracking, WiFi control from smartphone or tablets, the bright two-million dot viewfinder and external mic inputs will probably be the icing on the cake.

EXPOSURE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As subjective as exposure can be, the G7 performed well in most tricky exposure situations, both in video and stills photography. JPEGs straight from the camera are slightly flat, but you can choose more vivid options, as well as a variety of creative options to suit the occasion.

IMAGE QUALITY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Four Thirds image quality just keeps getting better, even at the higher ISO settings. In a range of tests, from portraiture at high ISOs through to landscape photography the image quality was well above acceptable.

VALUE FOR MONEY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Unlike the Panasonic GH4 that had an initial price point closer to \$2500, the G7 has is \$899 (body only), which I should note is dearer than some DSLR cameras. Then again, the 4K video features, along with other great capture options, should be enough to dismiss those concerns.

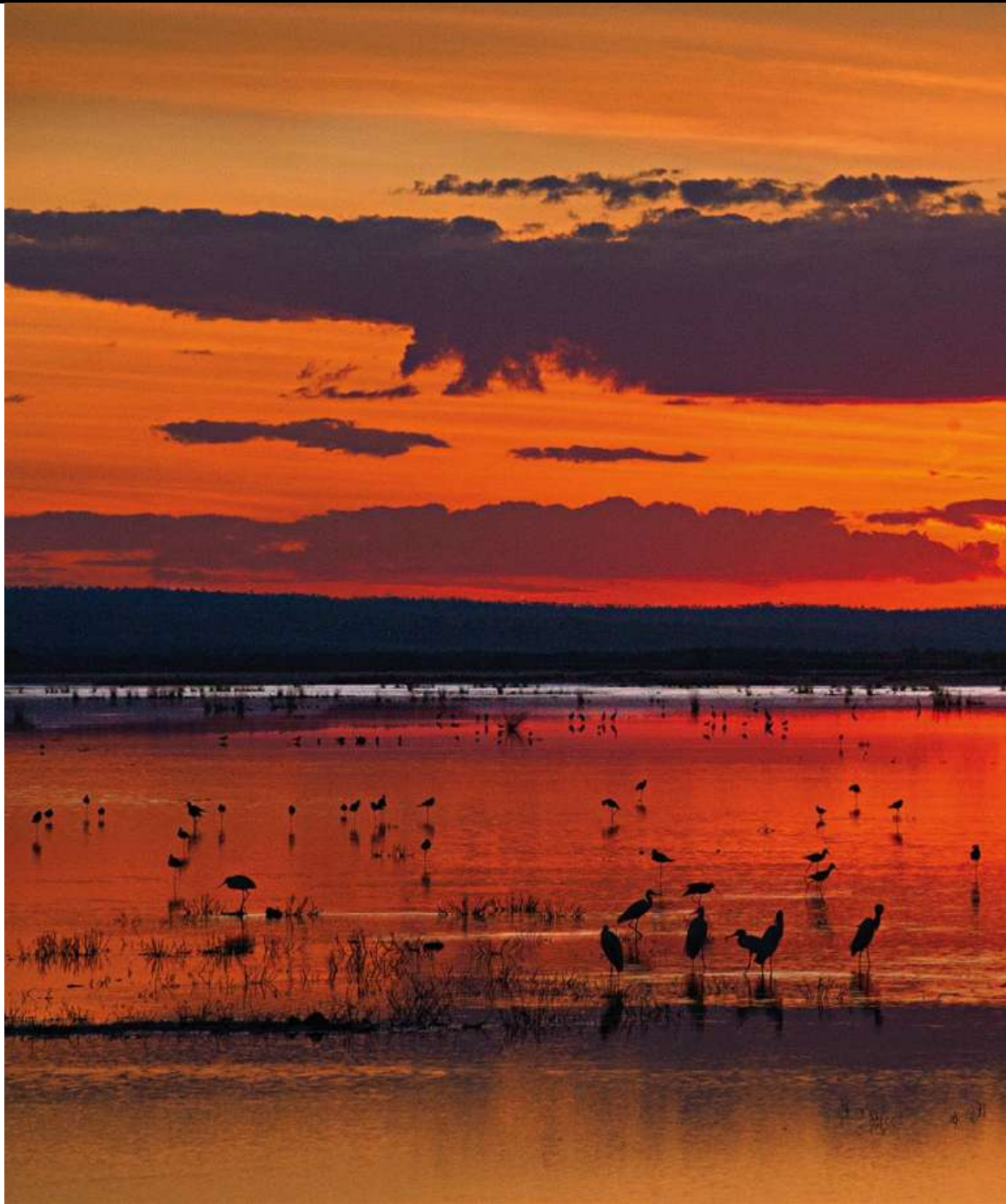
FINAL WORD

The Panasonic G7 is a very capable camera which can easily out-perform some larger DSLRs, particularly if you enjoy capturing action images. Add to this the 4K video and 4K photo functions, good AF performance even in low light, and the Wifi connectivity that most photographers want now, and you have a camera which will suit most needs.





With Cheryl
Mares

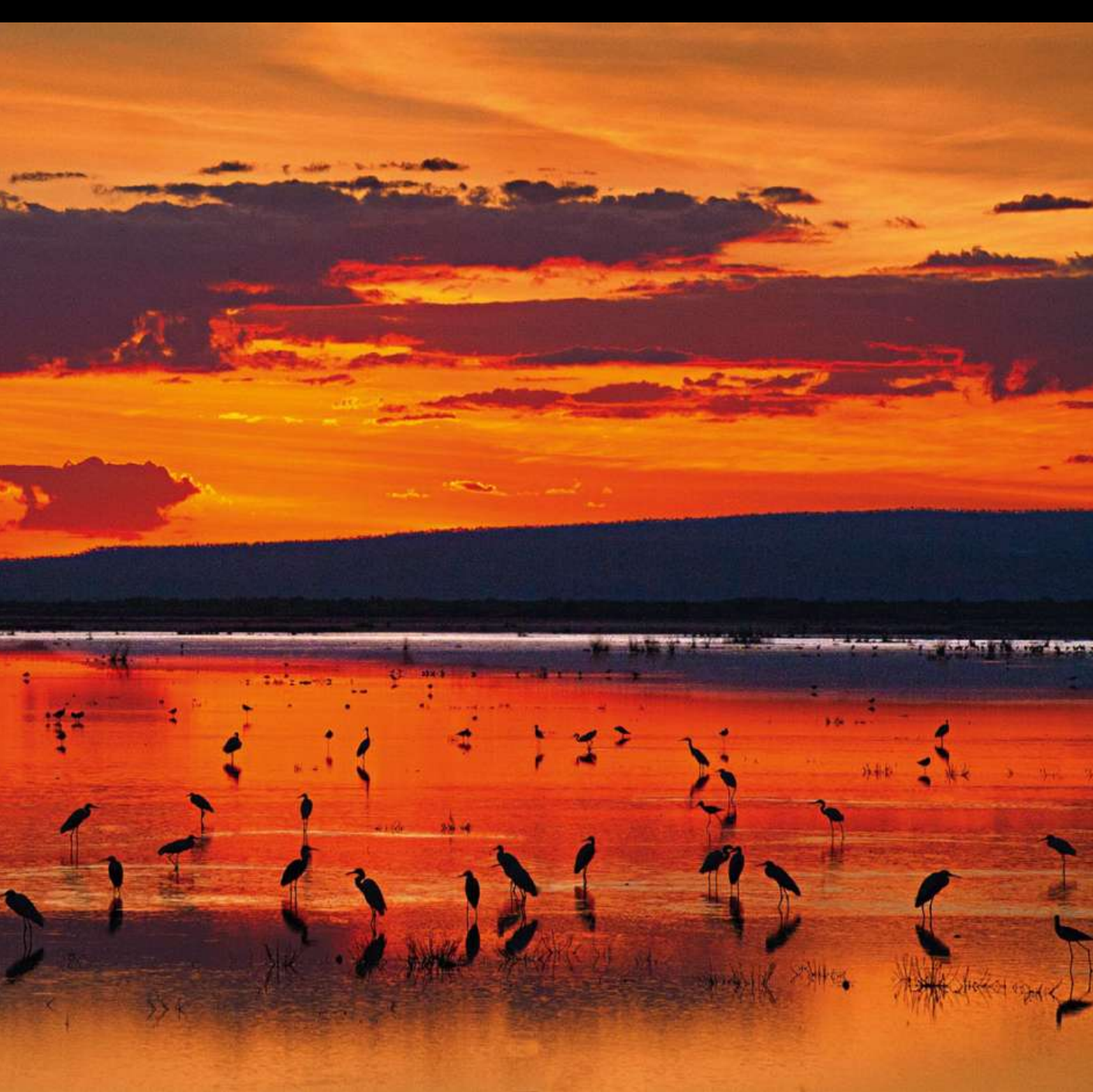


A long road

My introduction to photography came early – I helped to maintain a steady 20°C for the developer solution in the laundry tubs while my father was developing black and white photographs! I was employed with CSIRO for over 25 years as a Technical Officer and I obtained a Certificate in Photography in 1978 as part of my career progression. At that time I regularly developed and printed glass plates from an electron microscope and I prepared material for scientific publication and presentation. In 1990 I worked at the Australian Cotton Research Institute at Narrabri, NSW, where I continued my photographic

interests, mostly focused on the macro photography of insects. Many of my images are used in advisory books for researchers, agronomists and extension staff. At that time I used Olympus cameras and lenses for macro and microscopic work. I moved to Brisbane in 2004, where I worked for the Queensland Police Service, my first official job as a photographer. I scanned film to digital files, gaining skills in colour management and learning how to read difficult number plates! At this time I bought a digital camera and I went back to TAFE to upgrade my digital knowledge. In 2010 I joined Brisbane Camera Group and I started to compete in local competitions, joining APS in

2011. I quickly learned that going to judging evenings was a great benefit. I often learned more from other people's images than my own! This has really improved my skills and introduced me to international competitions, where I have just gained my FAPS and AFIAP. My key interests are nature photography and landscapes, and I have a special interest in birds. At home I study and breed finches, aligning my interests with my partner's bird keeping and we regularly give talks at bird clubs around Australia. We travel to appease our birding interests and we never miss the opportunity to photograph nature at its best. One of my favourite places is the Kimberley region in northern Western Australia. 🌄



**CLOCKWISE FROM
FAR LEFT**

Crow butterflies; Egret
haven; Gannet searching
the rookery; Gouldian
finch preening.





TOP TO BOTTOM

Bee eaters at sunrise;
Receding waters; Blue
jeans frog; Green-
crowned brilliant
hummingbird.





With David
Oldfield

Beyond the visible



Isaac Newton first explained in 1672 how a glass prism splits sunlight into the colours of the rainbow. Then in 1800 English astronomer William Herschel discovered infrared radiation (IR) by placing a thermometer in the region of the spectrum beyond red and observing an increase in temperature. Johann Ritter was stimulated by this to observe in the following year that light sensitive silver chloride was darkened beyond the violet end of the spectrum by what became known as ultraviolet radiation (UV).

Back in the “pre-digital” age I became addicted to using Kodak Infra Red film with its distinctive appearance of white foliage, black skies and ‘rice pudding’ grain. Most digital manipulation software these days has the ability to simulate infra red to give a different feeling to black and white conversions from full-colour digital captures. I had a Pentax DSLR converted some years ago so I could take IR photographs as easily as ‘normal’ shots, without the requirement to place a very dark red filter over the lens like we had to use with IR film.

About two years ago I noticed that the website of the company which had done the IR conversion for me was offering ‘full spectrum’ conversions for digital cameras to facilitate UV photography. Being a serial nerd I decided to give it a go. I thought, “It can’t be that hard, can it?” Famous last words! It isn’t hard – it’s almost impossible, because you’re using your equipment way outside what it was designed to do. Most modern digital cameras have an inbuilt filter (often called an Internal Cut Filter ICF) which prevents IR and UV radiation reaching the digital sensor and contaminating the colours produced. This ICF is removed during a full spectrum conversion and replaced with a clear glass filter optically equivalent to the ICF so the autofocus still works.

In simple terms, visible light extends from a wavelength of 400 nanometres (nm) for blue to around 700nm at the red end. UV covers wavelengths below about 400nm, IR refers to those above about 700nm. You need to put a filter over the lens which passes UV, but excludes all visible and IR wavelengths. Glass itself begins to absorb UV below about 350nm and modern anti-reflection lens coatings are VERY efficient at blocking UV wavelengths. So you need a lens which will pass UV, which tends to set the cash register ringing loudly! There are older design lenses, made before multi-coatings, and some enlarging lenses which do a good job.

Before we go down that slippery slide, what sort of subjects give interesting images in UV? Close-up macro images of flowering plants can look good, as often the petals conceal dark patterns which become visible under UV. There is also a related type of image, known as ultraviolet induced visible fluorescence (UVIVFL) where a UV source such as a UV-LED torch is shone onto a subject in the dark to reveal fluorescent colours.

I discovered a wonderful resource – www.ultravioletphotography.com – where all my questions about this intriguing and fascinating unseen world were answered by knowledgeable and friendly folk. A quick scan revealed little or no images of Australian native flowers on their site or anywhere else, so what could I do except plunge in! The challenge of being one of the first “explorers” to see Australian native wildflowers in UV was one I couldn’t ignore. I had been in a similar situation many years ago when I started a project to photograph cattlemen’s huts in the Victorian High Country. I found putting together a solid ‘body of work’ making documentary photographic records of the huts to be very rewarding. It was even



more satisfying when I was able to participate in the rebuilding of several huts which were destroyed in the 2003 alpine bushfires, by contributing my photos to assist in the design of the replacements.

My UV images will never win prizes in nature competitions, just like my hut photos didn’t win any landscape prizes, but they have the intangible benefit of seeing for the first time a wonderful facet of our flora. Being a member of the Australian Photographic Society has given me a lot of pleasure over the years and a sense of satisfaction at being able to “put something back” for all the joy photography has given me. ☺

TOP TO BOTTOM
Images of *Wahlenbergia stricta* (Austral Bluebell) in visible light (top), ultraviolet induced visible fluorescence (middle) and ultraviolet light (bottom).



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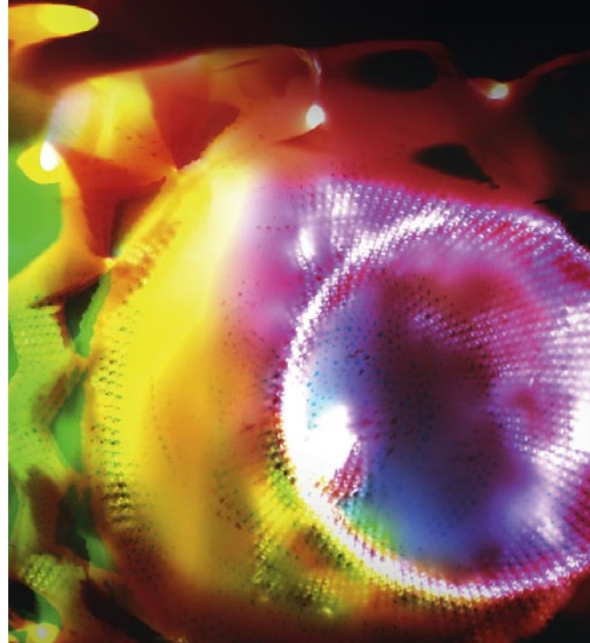
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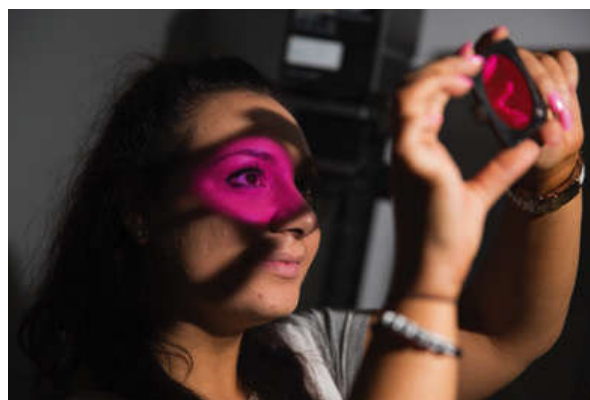


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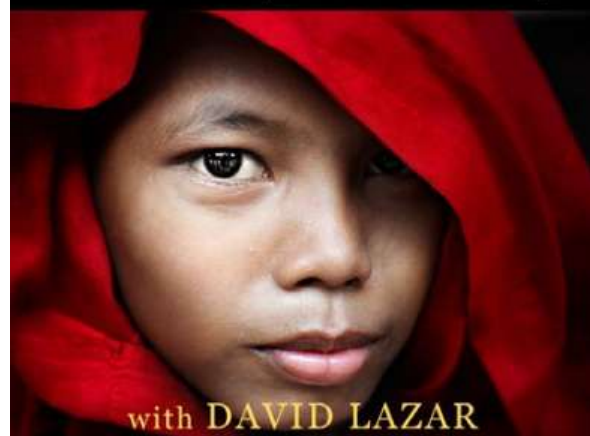
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THIS MONTH'S WINNER!

Fine composition & colour

Sandra Pyke says she often goes down to Hastings Pier (southeast of Melbourne in Victoria) to enjoy the 'feel' of the area. "It brings me peace. Something I'm trying to master is long exposure. To date this is one of my favourite shots, but I know I could still do with some advice. I have a lot to learn! Unfortunately I'd forgotten to clean the filter so I had to remove some dust spots." Technically this ticks quite a few boxes. I'm guessing you had a tripod, as this is really dead sharp. While the clouds are slightly blurred, the tops of the yacht masts are still and the clarity is good. The colour gets a big tick as well. I'd be tempted to crop a little from the bottom to remove the bright spot sitting half on the edge of the frame. Some foreground interest would also be good, especially since the right-hand part of the frame is a bit bare. If you'd framed to get that line of boats leading right from the left bottom corner, it also could have been a more dynamic composition and eliminated the empty right. Nonetheless, this is a highly creditable effort.

SAIMA'S TIP: In future clean your filters to save yourself some post-production work!

TITLE: Serenity

PHOTOGRAPHER: Sandra Pyke

DETAILS: Sony SLT-A77v, Sony 16-50mm lens @ 16mm focal length, 30s @ f/16, ISO 100. Image taken around 4.30am before sunrise. Adobe Lightroom for brightness/contrast and curves. Removed spots in Photoshop.





Let there be light

Emma Leslie was in LA visiting friends when she met dancer Emma Carson through a mutual friend. She asked her to bring her pointe shoes for a get-together and shoot. “I picked her up from her home in Malibu, but being winter time the sun was setting not long after 4pm and we were running out of light. I saw the pier and we headed out to the middle to capture the sunset behind her as she posed.” Having to rush does not usually result in the best photos, and while you had a great subject, I think you were short-changed with a strong plan. The fence look is hardly romantic or exciting, and it looks as if your subject needs that pier for support. I don’t think it does justice to a beautiful, highly toned, athletic body. The backlighting, which is just a bit too bright, doesn’t help either. The subject isn’t a silhouette, but there is also not enough light on the front of the body to show up the colour and detail in her dress and hair well. It’s a “half-half” shot. If you’d opted for the silhouette, you would have needed to move to the right and expose for the highlights.

SAIMA’S TIP: One option to get detail and light onto the front of the subject is a Speedlight flash to provide more light – by increasing the + amount of the flash – or a reflector to bounce some of the light back onto the body to lighten it up.

TITLE: Emma Carson on Malibu Pier

PHOTOGRAPHER: Emma Leslie

DETAILS: Canon 5D Mk III, 85mm lens, 1/1250s @ f/2.8, ISO 100, cropped to centre, decreased highlights, increased whites and vibrance.



It pays to connect

Claire Budden was at a Parramatta opening party as part of the opening night for the Sydney Festival and she was keen to capture people’s reactions as they walked through the Fire Garden, an installation representing the impact of fire on the landscape. Many people were whipping out their phones to take photographs. This was her favourite “because of the connection between the two people standing together”. With these sorts of photos they really get more interesting when people are taking photos of people taking photos of people taking photos! However, this shot just shows that people with phone cameras are not using viewfinders or tripods. The result they will have got would be not far off all that blur in the background. That said, this shot isn’t that sharp either. Yes, they look like a couple as they are standing shoulder to shoulder and taking photos of the same scene, but they are not interacting as their attention is not on each other.

SAIMA’S TIP: Generally it pays to look for subjects who are making some sort of connection, though if they are not that can be a statement of its own!

TITLE: Untitled

PHOTOGRAPHER: Claire Budden

DETAILS: Canon 60D, EF 50mm f/1.8 II lens @ 50mm, 1/40s @ f/1.8, handheld. Sharpening in Lightroom.

Venice at night

Claire Limbrick writes: “On a break in Venice I thought I would try something new – some night photography. Tripod in hand, my husband and I walked through the streets which were bustling and over-run with tourists during the day. It turned out to be the best evening of the trip and there were plenty of spots with nobody around. I liked the look of everything closed at night, as the absolute polar opposite scenario to the day. I used the time delay setting to stop any shake. I decided not to straighten the buildings on the left as Venice is a city where nothing is straight and most buildings look like they could collapse at any time... hopefully this doesn’t ruin the image.” This is clear and sharp so the long exposure with your tripod has paid off. You didn’t really need that f/22 aperture unless you really wanted that starburst effect with the street lamp. A mid-range setting such as f/11 would have done the job equally well and there would have been no overly bright lamps as a result. I know you wanted empty streets and canals, but if you’d managed to shoot



earlier in the evening, around dusk, you would’ve had a better chance of getting improved colour in the scene while there was still some light in the sky. Shooting for an HDR effect would also help to get more detail.

SAIMA’S TIP: Most lenses don’t have their best sharpness at the extreme ends, and the best f/stop - often referred to as the “sweet spot” - can often be a mid-range setting like f/11.

TITLE: Untitled

PHOTOGRAPHER: Claire Limbrick

DETAILS: Canon EOS 7D, 51mm focal length, 25s @ f/22, ISO 640.

Consider careful cropping

According to Marietta McGregor, while on a trip to Venice she went with an artist friend to the island of Burano to enjoy the vivid colours of the fishermen’s houses. She says: “It was lunch and siesta-time, the sun was high, with deserted back streets and tiny piazzas, many draped with washing. It was a quiet relief after the cruise passenger-crammed alleyways around San Marco. Wandering away from the canal, we saw this trompe l’oeil sheet in a side street. I wanted to capture the feeling of the hot bright day and sleepy stillness.” Well, the emptiness of the streetscape provides that stillness you wanted. It’s just a shame about the dullish pasty coloured sky. There is a lot going on in this Burano-scape with those buildings, clothes lines, pot plants and bits and bobs, so I’d be tempted to crop even more on the left to get rid of the less interesting white building. The real excitement in this scene is the colourful stuff. Your job of lightening up those shadows is not too bad as there can be the temptation to push it too far. Another option would have been to crop at the shooting stage – getting in much closer and shooting more abstract compositions could have been fun.

SAIMA’S TIP: Look for the weakest elements in a scene and exclude them in framing your shot as much as possible to avoid losing quality in later cropping efforts.

TITLE: Burano Wash Day

PHOTOGRAPHER: Marietta McGregor

DETAILS: Olympus OMD-EM5, 12-50mm f/3.5-6.3 lens. Lightroom 4, cropping, sharpening, clarity, shadows adjusted, image cropped to remove drainpipe, some post processing to bring out detail in shadows.



Straighten up

It would be so much better if you had a decent point of interest in the foreground of this shot – say a boat – rather than a few lonely poles. I'm guessing that a mass of storm clouds was the attraction in this scene, but it just looks dark and "doomy". With cloud formations, some are dramatic with strong shapes and interesting variations in tone, while others are just a mass of grey. Unfortunately the sky in this scene has more of the mass type than the former. It's also better to shoot a sequence of shots – whether three or five or seven – and then combine them. It makes a better HDR composite than the 'one-shot' method.

SAIMA'S TIP: With wide-angle shots which have a lot of side content leaning in towards the centre, it's worth straightening the subjects in post-production even though you will lose some of the side subject matter.

TITLE: Fremantle fishing boat harbour

PHOTOGRAPHER: Shaun Fearn

DETAILS: Pentax K5 II, Sigma lens @ 10mm, 1/25s @ f/5, ISO 400, manual exposure. Photoshop CS5 to enhance HDR.



Too much self-interest?

Alan Furnell says: "This is my daughter doing what 21st century teenagers (and not-so-teenagers) do on a family holiday to China. The misty background was due to the ever-present pollution haze, but I think it allows a clear enough representation of the location without detracting from the 'star'. I like the fact that the strongest colour feature, the orange Panasonic HX-WA10 camera, fell right into the centre of the picture. It was just before midday local time, in the northern hemisphere winter, hence the low angle of the sunlight. The left-hand side was cropped a little to cut out a railing bottom corner, and so was the right-hand side, to even up the spacing of the two tallest buildings on each side of the frame. Otherwise what you see is what was taken."

I hope this shot is a slightly tongue-in-cheek take on the 'selfie' obsession! Yes, the grungy weather doesn't make for a great Shanghai cityscape, but including the subject with the characteristic arm position holding an orange camera doesn't really make it more exciting. It's not a portrait and not a cityscape, so what is it? To rate as a cityscape, we would need much more right and left - say a panoramic format - to illustrate the expanse of the city. The 'selfie' person would then appear proportionally much smaller and less significant, which is more in line with their interest in the image (unless they really do want a 'selfie'!).

SAIMA'S TIP: One of the problems with many travel 'selfies' is they are often a distortion of reality, aggrandising the subject and relatively diminishing the world they live in.

TITLE: Me, my selfie and Shanghai

PHOTOGRAPHER: Alan Furnell

DETAILS: Olympus FE-190 @ 6mm, 1/640s @ f/4.6, ISO 80.



No 'press button' answer!

Taken in beautiful afternoon light with a lot of colour, it was tempting for Karen O'Connor to keep this image coloured. However, she writes: "I thought colour distracted from the subject of the girl and the late afternoon light, so I converted it to monochrome. The only problem is I don't understand gradients and the result here is hit and miss, as I just experimented until it looked right to me. I could save so much time if I knew a formula on how to create a beautiful black and white image." Sorry, but there isn't one formula – or 'press button' answer – for creating a great mono image! A well-exposed original shot with good detail in the highlights and shadows plus a clear idea of the end product – whether it will end up as a print or whatever – are good starting points for black-and-white, or colour for that matter. That said, I think you've done a half-decent job with your adjustments, and this image shows you have a good eye for skin tones. It could go a tad lighter but the tonality is good. What impacts this image adversely is all the graffiti and the painted rocks around the subject. They are distracting and draw the eye away from the subject. It's important to remember what the real interest is here, and that lovely child wins hands down against the rock art. Also, using a 200mm lens could have helped here by blurring the background more.

SAIMA'S TIP: Lighter areas of a scene draw the eye in towards them more than darker areas, so a subject can suffer if they have to compete.

TITLE: Girl on the rocks

PHOTOGRAPHER: Karen O'Connor

DETAILS: Camera: Nikon D800, Nikon 85mm f/1.4 lens, 1/250s.



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